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SIX MONTHS AMONG BRIGANDS

BY ELLEN M. STONE

I

The Capture of Miss Stone and Mrs. Tsilka on Turkish Soil—Murder of a Chance Witness—Flight into the Mountains—Sufferings and Dread of the Night Rides through the Forest—The Plot disclosed by the Brigands—$125,000 Ransom Demanded—First Letter to the World

DURING the frequent missionary tours which I have made in Macedonia during the last twenty years and more, I have often been conscious of danger from the brigands who have long infested that country. Thrice before my capture I had come into personal contact with them. Once I spent the night in the common room of a khan or inn with a brigand sleeping on the other side of the fire; once two horses were stolen from the party with which I was traveling; and the third time two bandits stopped us on the road, but hesitated as to what manner of people we were, and so let us pass.

On our journey in September, however, we had no thought of fear. Only three weeks before, I had come to Bansko by way of Strumitza and Djumia with two Bulgarian ladies, teachers in our village schools, accompanied only by a muleteer and a young native boy. We had ridden through a wild and rugged country, spending four days on the road, sleeping one night in a native house, and two in khans, all without molestation. I had, indeed, traversed the road on which we were finally captured many times before, and, knowing the people and their ways, I was conscious of all the safety of long familiarity. The purpose of the journey to Bansko from my home in Salonica was to conduct a summer training class for the native Bulgarian teachers in our primary schools and the Bible women who are working under the auspices of our mission station at Salonica. The class numbered eight women, gathered from various parts of the province, only one, a young teacher from Servia, being absent. Mrs. Katerina Stephanova Tsilka, who was in Bansko visiting her parents after an absence of nine years, kindly assisted me, relating some of her personal recollections of Dwight L. Moody, and giving the class a number of practical talks on nursing and what to do in emergencies. She was admirably fitted for such a service, having studied at Northfield Seminary, later graduating from the Training School for Nurses at the Presbyterian Hospital in New York. Two years before she had married Mr. Gregory Tsilka, an Albanian by birth, who was then completing his course at the Union Theological Seminary in New York, and in the following summer they had returned to Macedonia to devote themselves to Christian work in their native land. Both had studied in the mission schools of the American Board, at Monastir and Samakov, before going to America, and both are thoroughly conversant with the Bulgarian and English languages. Mr. Tsilka is also

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MRS. KATERINA STEPHANOVA TSILKA

familiar with Albanian, Turkish, Greek, and Wallachian. They had located at Kortcha, in Albania, Mr. Tsilka as preacher in the little Protestant congregation there, and teacher in the only existing girls' school which gives instruction in the native tongue. Mrs. Tsilka, in addition to her duties as wife and mother, devoted some time to the profession of physician and nurse, and gained a large influence in the city by her skill and sympathy.

During the sessions of the class, we visited several villages of the Raslug district, making journeys of an hour to three hours, sometimes on foot, once with an ox-cart, and once with horses, these tours being for the purpose of affording our teachers glimpses of Christian work in various parts of the field, and also to inspire the hearts of Christian friends in these villages. We little dreamed that we were everywhere watched, brigands skulking along our pathway, hiding behind trees and rocks, seeking what they deemed a fitting opportunity to take us. Yet so they themselves told us later.

A Confident Departure

Finally the day dawned for our departure from Bansko. I must go back to Salonica, the teachers to their work, and Mr. and Mrs. Tsilka to their home in Albania. We said good-bye to many hospitable friends, for here in Bansko we were all well acquainted, and felt much at home; here we have a church, a parsonage, and a largely attended school. Moreover, Bansko, set among the foot-hills of the beautiful snow-covered Perim mountains, had been a delightful spot in which to spend these summer weeks, and we had planned an early start for Djumia, choosing the day before the weekly market in order that there might be more company on the road. One of our friends, however, had died the previous evening, and we delayed our departure to show our respect for the dead and our sympathy with his sorrowing family. Accordingly, we were much later in starting than we had intended—the first of a series of untoward events.

It was a perfect September day, the third of the month, clear, warm, and sunshiny, so that our spirits rose as we entered into the merry confusion of loading and mounting our horses. Great numbers of our friends had gathered to bid us good-bye and to give us their loving wishes for a prosperous journey. The hallway of the house and the veranda were bright with the pretty Bulgarian dresses. All ages were there. Dear old Grandmother Mareeka, my first hostess in Bansko, more than twenty years ago, who had been ill during our class-sessions, had made her way feebly to Deacon Ivan's house to tell us that we were " mnoge milo " (very dear) to her, and to give us her parting blessing. Her aged brother, Deacon Peter, was there also, for were not his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Oosheva,

and her only son, Peter, to be of our party! It was in his home that the first missionaries who had visited Bansko, about thirty-five years ago, held the first preaching service. He came to add his fervent "God bless you!" Our friends covered us with exquisite carnations, pinks, and other flowers as a parting offering of their love.

As we finally rode out through the big gate into the narrow street I noticed with surprise, which, unfortunately, did not reach the point of suspicion, that my *kiridjee* (driver) led the way by the upper end of the village. When I asked him why he did so, instead of going out lower down, according to our usual custom, he answered that it was better so, and we let it pass, although I continued to feel a little uneasy at the unusual liberty he had taken. A few moments later we were joined by Mr. and Mrs. Tsilka with their weeping friends. The hearts of these young parents were doubly torn by the thought that they were leaving a little grave in the Protestant cemetery in Bansko, where they had laid their baby boy only three weeks before.

Faithfully yours,
Ellen M. Stone.

Unaware of Stealthy Watchers

Our party now being complete, we clattered merrily along the stony road, laughing and talking. There were just thirteen of us—unlucky number—three young men, students in our schools; three of our young lady teachers; Mrs. Oosheva, an older Bible woman; Mr. and Mrs. Tsilka, and myself, with three muleteers.

Lofty peaks of the Perim mountains loomed up in the south, and luxuriant forests covered all the foot-hills to the plain. How could a suspicion of danger overshadow the hearts of the happy party? They were rejoicing in the love of the friends from whom they had just parted, basking in the beauty of God's world about them, and full of hopes and high resolves to accomplish nobler things in the future for the Bulgarians in Macedonia through their schools and spiritual training. We had been provided with the usual *teskere*, or traveling passport, permitting us to make this journey. We were on the main road between Bansko and Djumia—though this road is only a rough mountain trail—and we had seven men with us, one of them armed. Never within my knowledge had so large a party been attacked. Three hours distant from Bansko we passed the guard-house, where Turkish soldiers looked out at us stolidly, and then we went on down into the beautiful valley, the trail following a mountain

brook full of little cascades and cool, dark pools. After a time we dismounted, that we might better enjoy the beauties of the way, and hold converse with the young students, all of whom were walking. I suppose that hidden eyes watched our every movement.

At length we came to a lonely bit of greensward, under the shade of forest trees, by which purled and foamed the stream along its rocky bed. Some one suggested lunch, and immediately the stores were brought out, and we sat down in great content to refresh ourselves. How delicious were the meat balls, the fried cakes resembling crullers, and the native pastry (banitza), with fresh water from the stream! But one of us, Mrs. Oosheva, was suffering painfully from cramps induced by eating honey that morning, a fact that played an important part in our subsequent experiences. Mrs. Tsilka and I had eaten of the same honey, but with no ill results. When we were refreshed we set out again on our way, hoping to reach the khan where we intended to spend the night, before darkness should overtake us.

MISS STONE

Taken while she was on the Editorial Staff of "The Congregationalist"

The Ambush at the Balanced Rock

Mrs. Oosheva led the column, with her son walking by her side—a fine, chivalrous boy. We wound along the steep trail for some distance, the sure-footed mountain horses following one another in Indian file. Thus we approached a cliff known as the Balanced Rock, a bald crag of the mountain which here juts out into the valley, turning the stream to one side. At this point the pathway leads down into the water, so that travelers must ride into the swift current, pass around the rock, and strike the trail again on the farther side. Those in the lead of such a cavalcade as ours would necessarily be hidden from those in the rear while passing the rock. An admirable spot for an ambush. But we had passed it safely so many times before that none of us thought of danger.

Suddenly we were startled by a shout: a command in Turkish, "Halt!" I saw Mrs. Oosheva, who was then in the middle of the stream, start backward and attempt to turn her horse aside. An armed man had sprung toward her with uplifted musket-butt, as if to strike her from her saddle. She turned a horror-stricken face upon me, and then swayed as if to faint. Before any of us could say a word, armed men were swarming about us on all sides, seeming to have sprung from the hillside. They crowded upon us, and fiercely demanded that we dismount. They even made as if to pull us off our pack-saddles.

"Give us time," I said in Bulgarian, "and we will dismount. We are women, not men, and cannot get down alone."

I saw the boy Peter assisting his fainting mother, taking her down from the horse in his young, strong arms. At the same moment the placid, phlegmatic face of my driver appeared by my side. His was the only calm face in our party—strangely calm, as I remembered afterward—but I then ascribed it to his natural temperament. Somehow we dismounted in quick time from our saddles, with the brigands shouting, "Hurry, hurry," and waving their guns over our heads. They drove us like cattle into the stream. Peter carried his all but unconscious mother on his back. One of the young teachers, who showed rare presence of mind through the whole experience, crossed on a log, but the rest of us plunged into the water, save Mrs. Tsilka, who had not been given time in the hurry to dismount. Dripping with water, our captors urged us mercilessly from behind, driving us up the sharp mountain

side beyond the stream, where we had to use both hands and feet to prevent falling. Mrs. Tsilka was dragged from her horse, her husband cutting the cords that bound her trunk and other luggage to the saddle, letting them fall where they would. Thus we all scrambled up the hill, a tangle of horses, drivers, men, and women, with the brigands yelling behind. Our captors themselves, we now know, were very nervous, fearing lest some one should come upon us and give the alarm, for we were not such a great distance from the Turkish guard-house. One poor traveler, indeed, who had the misfortune to happen upon us as we were being driven up the hill, was now in the hands of the brigands, wounded and bloody, as we were to know a little later to our horror.

MISS STONE'S MOTHER
From a recent photograph

The Round-up on the Mountain Side

Though we were exhausted by the climb, they gave us no rest until we reached a small level spot among the trees, where we sank down exhausted, to regain our breath. We spread a rug and pillow for poor suffering Mrs. Ooshéva, whose boy was trying to comfort her, repeating constantly in the tenderest tones:

"Don't be afraid, mother. Don't be afraid. If we must die, we shall at least die together."

To their great credit it should be said that those young Bulgarian teachers were quiet and self-possessed to a wonderful degree. Only one of them began to give way to hysterical crying; but a word of reminder to her of the "everlasting arms" and the unfailing strength of the Master whom we serve, helped her to control herself. She tried to force into my hands a paper containing money which I knew was being forwarded to a suffering family in the city where she teaches. I put away her hand, feeling instinctively that it might be most unsafe with me. Mr. Tsilka, however, had given his wife his watch and money; the latter she secreted in her mouth, and tucked the watch under her belt, as she supposed, but it slipped below and showed. One of the brigands called her attention to it, sarcastically remarking that she had better put it away more securely. He could not have alarmed her more; if the brigands did not want our money and watches, what could be their purpose! All through the terrible climb up the hill, Mrs. Tsilka had led the way as though fearing nothing. All her anxiety was centered on her husband, lest the brigands should take him.

The band now gathered swiftly about us, with guns pointed. One of them ordered us to sit and wait — we knew not for what. I had hitherto given hardly more than a glance at them. Now I saw them plainly. They were of various ages, some bearded, fierce of face, and wild of dress; some younger, but all athletic and heavily armed. Some wore suits of brown homespun, some Turkish uniforms with red or white fezes, while others were in strange and nondescript attire: one had his face so bound up in a red handkerchief as to be unrecognizable, others with faces horribly blackened and disguised with what looked like rags bobbing over their foreheads—the knotted corners of their handkerchiefs, as we afterwards learned.

Their rifles and accoutrements seemed fresh and new, and they also carried revolvers and daggers in their belts, with a plentiful and evident supply of cartridges. They had undoubtedly intended to fill us with terror at the sight of them—and truly horrible they looked.

The Fate of the Turkish Traveler

I was especially anxious to learn whether these were of the Black Shirts, as highwaymen are commonly called in Macedonia, because of their filthy condition in general. Feeling somewhat reassured on that point, I turned again to our teachers, and thus failed to see the first act in the approaching tragedy. Suddenly I heard rapidly approaching footsteps above us, then a cruel blow. The Turk whom the brigands had captured was driven past us, his arms pinioned behind him with a scarlet girdle. As he walked, the brigand struck him violently with the butt of his gun. Blood was streaming from a wound in his temple. Once he turned and looked back piteously at his pursuer. With tense nerves and a terrible fear in our hearts we saw him driven across the little opening where we sat, and into the thicket beyond. Here my eyes refused to follow. Alas that my ears could not also have been closed, that I might not have heard the horrible dagger thrusts and the death cry that followed.

MRS. TSILKA, HER BABY BORN IN CAPTIVITY, AND MISS STONE

From a photograph taken specially for "McClure's"

One of the brigands now emerged from the thicket and signalled to me without saying a word. With indescribable horror tugging at my heart, but with a calm exterior, I rose and obeyed him. What was coming? Would they do with me as with the Turk? "Hope thou in God" whispered itself in my heart, and I was strengthened to await whatever might happen. But I was not compelled to enter the thicket. Following the motions of the brigand, I went to a spot higher up the hill some distance from the party, where I sat down alone, experiencing an intense revulsion of feeling as I noticed those hideously blackened faces with their rags and knots bobbing about their heads as though the brigands were gay carnivalers just before the Lenten fast. I became conscious that I was very thirsty; that my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. I must have expressed this want aloud in some way, for the brigand who was guarding me, the same who had summoned me, said I could find some water at a spring which he indicated by a motion of his hand. It was the direction also which the Turk had taken, and from which he was never to return. Was this a grim refinement of cruelty? It was almost too much for me to go thither, but I finally started, with veiled eyes, fearing to see what must have lain there. After slaking my thirst with water from my hand, I was returning to my place, when it occurred to me—humorously enough, as it now seems—that I must not leave my umbrella, and so I went back and found it, no objection being made by my guard. Then I took my last look into the eyes of the dear young teachers, my coworkers, for whose safe return to their parents or to their places of service I had made myself responsible. Alas, that I was now cruelly prevented from fulfilling my pledge. I remember noticing, even then, the calmness which was given to Mr. Tsilka as he sat holding the halter of his bare-backed horse with one hand, while he leaned his face on the other in deep dejection. I did not then know that his wife, too, had been called by our captors, and was even then separated from him. Had I known that I should have

been even more impressed with the marvelous power of his faith in restraining himself. But had he fired one shot to save her, terrible consequences must have followed. Peter was still trying to comfort his mother, who now lay more quietly on my rug. The students were sitting, pale-faced and silent. But I could not tarry; so saying to them, "Pray for me as you never prayed before!" and hearing Mareeka's soft promise, "Yes'm," I went back, feeling that it would probably be to my death.

What was my surprise to find that I was no longer alone. There sat Mrs. Tsilka, with her back to the guard and her face turned towards our fellow-travelers. Is it strange that even in those dreadful moments a feeling of relief came over me that my fate, whatever it was to be, would be shared by another? Both of us were calm, at least outwardly. Our captors observed our quiet demeanor, and weeks later they told us that we had been very brave when taken. They little knew the reason of that quiet. We were leaning hard upon God's promise: "Fear not, I am with thee. Fear not, I will help thee," and God was telling us, "Be not afraid."

TYPES OF MR. TSILKA'S CONGREGATION

Drawn by Corwin Knapp Linson from a photograph taken specially for "McClure's"

While waiting to see what would be done with us next, we had time to observe that the brigands were hurriedly examining our baggage. To our surprise, they seemed to be taking only food, of which we had a good supply, being provisioned for three days. Some of them ate ravenously, as they emptied the baskets and bags. Later they said they had eaten no bread for two days. I also observed one brigand talking to the driver who had led us from Bansko; I thought now I knew what they were talking about. The brigands were still rummaging among our belongings, though little seemed to be taken. One of them found a Bible, held it out to a companion to see, and, to my great

THE LITTLE CHURCH AT KORTCHIA IN ALBANIA, JUST OVER THE LINE FROM MACEDONIA, WHERE MR. TSILKA PREACHES

comfort, brought it with him. It was neither of my Bibles—the English version, which had been the stay and comfort of my beloved missionary sister in Japan, nor yet my copy in Bulgarian; it was the property of one of our young teachers. Only He who searcheth all hearts can know what comfort and strength our souls derived from this Bible; it was our only book.

The Flight 'Cross Country

At length the brigands ended their search, and after a hurried consultation two of them approached and motioned us roughly to rise

and go with them. They indicated not the direction toward the thicket, which still held my thoughts fascinated, but up and back from the spot where we had been sitting. The rise was sharp, and presently across plowed land, where I stumbled and found great difficulty in walking on account of my wet skirts. One of the brigands seized me by my arm with a grip that left black and blue marks for weeks afterwards. Another took Mrs. Tsilka. I stole but one glance into the stern, bearded face of my keeper. He had thick curly hair of a light hue, surmounted by a black turban. Perspiration dripped from his face; he was evidently greatly excited.

After a time, when we were well-nigh exhausted, we came upon two of our own horses which had been taken by the brigands. Our captors compelled us to mount hurriedly, and we started at once through the now gathering twilight. The brigands fell into line before, behind, and on both sides of us. Poor Mrs. Tsilka glanced backward at our party below, where her husband still sat. Those we left were guarded all that night by some of the brigands, so that no alarm should be given until the band had escaped with their captives, as we learned afterwards. Shall I confess that my first sensation as we moved off was one of relief that we were not then and there to be searched for plunder, or put to a violent death. Both of us were dazed and numbed by what had befallen us. Strangely enough, it did not come clearly to my mind for some time that we were taken for ransom. To Mrs. Tsilka's question, when she realized that we were being carried away into the mountains by those strange, fierce men: "Why have you taken us?" the brigands vouchsafed only the answer:

"You will know all bye-and-bye."

"What will you do with us?" she asked in agony.

"Nishto! Nishto! Ne boi sia" (Nothing, nothing; don't be afraid).

We had started on that night's journey wearing only the thin summer garments in which we were captured. One of the men overtook us later on with a shawl for Mrs. Tsilka, at the same time giving me one of their heavy cloaks. The next day they brought me my waterproof; that and the shawl were invaluable to us day and night and so long as we were captives.

As the quiet of the night calmed our fevered nerves we observed the brigands marching noiselessly around us. Their moccasined feet made little sound. If they had occasion for conference no word was spoken aloud, nor could even their whisperings be heard. As if by magic, men were deployed upon one side or the other as scouts, the path often changing direction without apparent command. There was a weird fascination about the scene. The men, nearly a score in number, bore each his gun upon his back and their cloaks hung behind them, somtimes trailing on the ground, as they marched in file. The quiet moon looked down upon the scene.

"She sits up there like a spy," the brigands afterwards frequently said to us. "She says, 'Eto ghee! Tay sul!'" (Here they are. These are they).

Through the long hours of that night we traveled. Sometimes the barking of dogs would indicate the proximity of some shepherd with his flock, some threshing floor, or a lonely farmhouse on a hillside; but our line of march was kept by secluded ways, often under trees whose branches were so low as almost to sweep us from our saddles, notwithstanding the efforts of a man of gigantic strength, who went before, breaking down branches and pulling up young trees from our path. Once my horse stumbled and fell, carrying me with him. As I felt myself falling, a sweet content filled me as I thought that it might be the end of all my troubles; but it was not to be so. Instantly

men flocked around, raised me on my horse, inquired if I were hurt, and setting me again in the saddle, we moved on as if nothing had happened. Not knowing, then, the rule of brigands to allow no conversation, I remember talking with my guards, telling them of my aged mother, of my brothers, devoted to their only sister, and at one time I spoke of God's love and care for His children. One of the men, to my great surprise and relief, answered:

"Yes, we are all God's children."

I looked at him trudging sturdily along by my side, the moonlight falling on his head, from which he had removed his fez, and in my heart I named him "The Good Man," and so he was known to Mrs. Tsilka and myself as long as he was among our guards. They had tried to speak in Turkish to me, but as I answered them, "Bil mem" (I do not understand), they ceased by degrees, and used only Bulgarian. Repeatedly my guard tried to set me more at my ease by repeating, "Ne boi! Ne boi!" instead of "Ne boi sia!" but I caught his meaning only, "Be not afraid," and cared not for the incompleteness of the exclamation, disguised though it might be.

The long strain of riding hour after hour at length compelled us to beg for a halt and a little rest. After a time they granted it, helped us to alight from our horses, and spread a couple of their cloaks on the ground. Mrs. Tsilka and I sank down upon them, were covered with a brigand's coat, and slept the sleep of utter exhaustion. All too soon they roused us, and we started forward again. Toward morning, I think it must have been, we came to a descent so precipitous that we were compelled to dismount and walk, at one point even being taken on the back of one athletic fellow and lifted down where we could neither walk nor jump. During the night there must have been some murmuring at the new order of things, horses and women hampering the proverbial swift movements of the brigands. I did not hear the remark, but the answer was, "Think how many liras." This gave me my first inkling of the fact that we had been taken for ransom. Still, I dared not believe that this was the case, for I was yet under the spell of the horrible fear that our captors would murder us as they had their first victim.

The Halt at Dawn

The dawn was almost breaking when at last we stopped again. We were in a most desolate narrow valley between bare and towering crags. Half dead with exhaustion, we sat down upon a rock, only to be forced onward again. We could scarcely compel our feet to move, so the brigands helped us to climb up into a small ravine, gruesome and wild, but clothed with vegetation—a spot well fitted for such awful deeds as I thought might await us. Finally they seemed satisfied with a location, spread down a woolen rug which I then learned they had taken from one of our teachers, and told us to sit down.

One or two broke off great leafy branches from trees and arched them over us, making a booth to shelter us alike from the sun and from any intrusive eye. Most of the men disappeared, but only to take positions in our rear and above us, from which, unseen by us, they could command our movements. Of course we were faint with hunger and weariness, as we had eaten nothing save a few pears which were given us during the night, "instead of water," as the brigands said, since our happy lunch by the brookside. Once in the night, when we came to a stream, one of the brigands offered us water out of my own blue and white graniteware cup, which I had left suspended from my pack-saddle.

Now the men were concerned to bring us food, some milk in a kettle, with a couple of wooden spoons, and in one of her own towels they brought to Mrs. Tsilka the crumbled remains of some pastry which her mother had given her for the journey. That brought the tears. Dear mother, did she yet know that her daughter had been carried off, and perhaps killed? Would she ever know that we had actually eaten of her good things? They also brought a woolen homespun bag containing a stabrets of pork (cured in a pig's stomach), and a large piece of another one. This is a specialty in the Raglug district, and the Tsilkas and several of the teachers had provided themselves with a supply for the winter. They gave us pears, cornel-berries, red, tart, and astringent, and pressed them upon us in far greater quantities than we could eat. One brought a pretty tin box, empty, which Mrs. Tsilka knew was filled with honey for the journey; but some of the brigands, not being able to resist the temptation of such a tit-bit, had eaten it. We were thankful, however, for the box. What most surprised us was a gift from one of the brigands of a bunch of wild cyclamen, which touched us beyond anything else, and made hope spring up in our hearts, that men who

could thus care to supply us not only with the necessities of life, but even with flowers, could not be bent upon murdering us. This brigand had observed that some of the flowers which covered me like a breastplate the day before, when we rode out of Bansko, were still clinging to my dress (though our hearts were crushed and discouraged), and he had sent these blossoms of the woods "Because I saw you loved flowers." Here, then, was one heart, not wholly calloused, but susceptible to a noble impulse! One brigand had had his morning nap in my mackintosh before delivering it, but that did not matter compared with the comfort of gaining possession of it. We were already learning not to be too particular! At the last some one handed us the best of all, the Bible which they had taken from Mareeka's bundle. Mrs. Tsilka and I opened its blessed leaves with chastened hearts to find what message our Father in Heaven had for us, and were strengthened to feel that He was with us even in captivity.

We had no soap or towels, comb or brush, nor any of the indispensables of life, save the clothes we stood in. We learned the value of a tooth-brush and of a button-hook through our deprivation of them for nearly six months. We learned, too, with how few things one can manage to live when one must. That morning after our capture we procured water for our face and hands, and borrowed a comb from one of our guards. Mrs. Tsilka had let down her hair and covered her head with a white *shimeer* (head-handkerchief) on the road before we were captured, and thus she wore it during our entire captivity. I continued to do mine up as usual, though I adopted the handkerchief as a protection. My dress had been torn during the night, and we had no needles and thread, but one of the guards promptly supplied us. The needle, a large one of course, he took from the lining of his cap, and the coarse black thread from the knapsack which he carried upon his shoulders. Without a thimble I mended the rents in my garments, and sewed on the braid which had been ripped from my skirt in our hurried climb the night before. Our guards occupied themselves in similar ways, and in drying their wet feet. After a time they seemed, by common consent, to go to sleep. We were sure that some were watching us then, as always, but no one was in sight. It was a good time to put our money and a few valuables more securely away, for we yet expected to be plundered when it should suit the plans of the brigands.

Forward Again with the Twilight

Late in the afternoon some one brought us a chicken, only about half boiled, and explained that we were to have had one earlier, but that the shepherd who was to cook it had boiled it with ten hot red peppers and an *oke* (two and three-quarter pounds) of flour, making a dish which none of the brigands themselves could eat. Hence they had delayed until a second chicken could be boiled. Of course we thanked them, and when they commanded us to be ready to start on our journey, and brought us a pair of goat's-hair saddle-bags, we wrapped it up and put it with our other food, our Bible, tin box, and shawl strap into the bags.

Twilight was just beginning to fall when we emerged upon the height above us. Here we saw that a hard climb awaited us. The man who had gripped my arm so powerfully the night before stood ready to escort Gosposia, as Mrs. Tsilka was always called while among them. The one who was detailed to guard me delayed to give some directions about loading the horses, and directed two other men to lead them up after us.

"Ne sum konar" (I am not a hostler), answered one of them.

"Why are you here, then? Why didn't you stay at home?" impatiently demanded my guard, and started toward him to enforce his order.

Could those brigands have foreseen all the trials to their strength and patience which they were to endure during the next six months, with their captives, I wonder whether they would not have released us at once. On the first day they gave us no opportunity for more than a chance word with them. Finally the horses were started off, and we began our climb, Mrs. Tsilka and her guard having quite a start of us. We climbed steadily, but were soon puffing and perspiring because of the steepness of the way. "If only Mrs. Tsilka would stop, for I *must* sit and rest," I said, but she continued to climb and I was forced to follow. Afterward she said that she was ready to drop from fatigue, but as her guard did not suggest a stop she feared to ask him, and he almost carried her. Finally we reached the horses, mounted, and started on our second night's journey. Now I noticed more clearly than I could the night before that we never traveled by roads, but always by mountain trails or sheep or goat paths, or with no path at all.

If we saw a road anywhere, and hoped for

an easier journey on it, we were here to be disappointed, for the advance guard always crossed over and continued the journey through the underbrush, where their captives were often in imminent danger of Absolom's fate from the overhanging branches. The way that night was long also. We were permitted to dismount to rest once or twice, and once we were refreshed from a jar of buttermilk. Whence it came or how it was brought was a mystery to us, but we drank and were refreshed. Finally, we were dismounted and told to wait. After a time spent in silence and deep darkness the men came and commanded us each to put on one of their heavy goat-hair coats, the deep hoods of which they pulled over our heads, so that we could see only the ground immediately before us. Thus they led us to a doorway and through some dark outer space, into a small inner room with one small barred window.

MRS. TSILKA AND MISS STONE IN TRAVELING COSTUME

Drawn from a photograph taken specially for "McClure's"

In the Hut—The Plot Revealed

A light was brought. After the brigands had spread down some cloaks for us we were left to ourselves. The horror of a great fear fell upon us. What could they not do to us in that dark, hidden spot? Why had they brought us thither? If we should be killed now no one in the wide world would know our fate. The darkness settled into our very souls. We lay down in our corner, which was far harder than the hillside had been the day before, but no sleep came to refresh us. After daylight we looked from the tiny barred window, but could see only trees on a grassy slope. Though we occasionally heard voices during the day besides those of the brigands, we could never see any one. We were cut off from all mankind save those who had so mercilessly captured us.

After a time a guard brought us bread, and perhaps a bit of cheese, and inquired about food for dinner. We gave him the under-cooked chicken, to be prepared in some way so that we could eat it, and later in the day it was returned to us, fried and fairly palatable.

During the day three men came filing into the room. As they seated themselves upon the ground they filled all the space outside of our corner. They were heavily armed. Cartridges were upon their breasts and in belts around their waists. Daggers and revolvers hung at their sides. They had left their rifles behind; but, as though their present armament was not sufficient to protect them against us, one soon went out and brought in the three guns, which he stacked in a corner. They were at no pains to remove their fezes from their heads. Ah! We were only poor captives!

With trembling hearts under an exterior which we prayed God to keep calm, we waited until they should tell us the purpose of their visit. Finally, one whom I took to be the *voivoda* (leader) spoke rapidly and roughly, telling us that they were highwaymen, that among them were many nationalities (my glance involuntarily wandered from his face

to those of his companions; one, with dark, shaggy hair and beard, I thought might be of Spanish extraction, while he of the thick, light-hued curls might be a Jew, and the *voivoda* himself a Macedonian Parnak). He told us that they had taken us for money, and should hold us until the ransom was forthcoming.

"If it is not paid," he said menacingly, "there will be a bullet for you and a bullet for her"—indicating Mrs. Tsilka. We named him in our hearts "The Bad Man," and so called him for many weeks; but not to the end.

He warned us also that if we attempted to do anything for our own rescue, or anything that might endanger them, they would shoot us instantly. Filled with contempt at the manner in which they threatened us in our helplessness, I told them that they had taken the responsibility of stealing us from our God-given freedom, and must therefore find a way to restore us; we should not make it easier for them by any attempt to escape. I had by this time become convinced that our capture had been carefully planned by men who were desperately in earnest in carrying out their purpose, and I had no doubt of their readiness to visit sudden vengeance upon any one who should attempt to balk them in their plans, whether that one should be a captive or the friend of a captive. When I inquired the amount of the ransom, the spokesman took an envelope and wrote upon it, then passed it to the next man, who also wrote upon it and gave it to the third, who, after writing upon it, returned it to their spokesman.

"We have decided," he said, "to ask twenty-five thousand pounds for your ransom, and we are prepared to hold you until it is paid, or, in case of failure to pay it, there is, as I said before, a bullet for each of you, to let people know that we are not men to be trifled with."

We were utterly crushed with the helplessness of the position in which they had put us. To my inquiry as to when I should write the letter telling my friends of their demands, they answered:

"After a few days we will tell you, but not now."

Then they filed out of the tiny black room, leaving it filled with smoke from their tobacco, and the stench from clothes long unchanged, and also with something worse, for a cloud of despair settled into our very souls. Twenty-five thousand pounds! One hundred and ten thousand dollars! It could never be raised. Why should they not kill us at once? So we talked with each other until our faith in God overcame the fearful forebodings and comforted us. "Our God reigns, and we are still in His hands. He can deliver us from even these toils. We will trust Him still."

By Goat-path and Forest Trail

After dark we were summoned to start once more. That night Mrs. Tsilka had the misfortune to fall from her horse. As we were ascending a steep hill the saddle girth broke, throwing her violently backward down the stony mountain trail, the heavy pack-saddle falling on top of her. Seeing that she did not rise, nor cry out, I feared she had been killed. Giving no thought to the brigands, I attempted to dismount, but my guard refused to help me.

"Hold my horse, then," I commanded, "and I will get down myself."

They could do no less than permit me, and I hurried to help Mrs. Tsilka. She had not yet risen from the ground, and when we saw that she could not, all were much alarmed. The guards stood helplessly around, one of them inquiring if she would like medicine for fainting. After a little she was assisted to her feet, and her whole frame shook like an aspen leaf from the nervous shock, and she burst into almost hysterical weeping. The men left her to me to soothe, but urged the necessity of remounting as soon as possible. By-and-bye we reached a dense forest, and in one of the darkest glades they dismounted us in the gray of the dawn. Mrs. Tsilka was still trembling, and the dampness of that shaded place struck through to our very bones. After a time we were ordered to move on a little, without the horses, and we spent that bright, beautiful day under the trees.

In the afternoon we opened conversation with the brigand I thought to be a leader of the band. I told him that they had captured the wrong person if they expected to gain any such ransom for me; that only for a princess or the daughter of a millionaire could they hope to secure such an amount of money, while I was only an humble Christian worker and a daughter of the people. If they hoped to gain it because of my work as a missionary, again the case was hopeless, for the American Board had notified us several years before to take all possible precautions in our touring, since we must do it at our own risk; if captured at any time by

By Claude Shepperson

"IF IT IS NOT PAID. . . ."

brigands, they could not do anything toward ransoming us. He listened quietly, but incredulously, and was evidently unmoved by my representations. Then I told him of my mother, so enfeebled with her nearly ninety years that I feared that to hear by telegraph of the kidnapping of her only daughter might cause her death. Both Mrs. Tsilka and I broke down and cried bitterly for our dear ones, to whom we feared the news might even then have come with crushing weight. The brigand's eyes showed that we had made it hard for him too, for he could not wholly steel himself against our plea, as I went on to beg that, since their hopes for ransom could not be realized through me, they would free us and send us on our way. There was still time to rejoin our party and carry out our original plan for traveling and work. He listened quietly, but answered at last, resolutely:

"We can make no change. Whether you grieve or not, we shall carry out our plan to the end."

So we left off pleading with the man and tried to resign ourselves to the inevitable. More than once during the succeeding three or four days I intimated my willingness to write the letter announcing our capture and the reason for it, and to appeal for the raising of the ransom. Every day seemed to us too valuable to be lost.

The First Letter to the World

Finally, on the first Monday afternoon after our capture, the same three men who had talked with us before came to where we were sitting, almost as did Job of old, by a charcoal heap in that deserted place. They produced paper, ink, and a pen from a knapsack, found a board on which I could write, and then commanded me to choose some person in Bansko in whom I had confidence to act as an intermediary. He was to go down to Salonica, so that negotiations could be opened with Constantinople, and a letter sent to Treasurer Peet of the Turkish Missions of the American Board. Finally I chose an old-time friend in the Bansko church, and wrote to him, and also to Mr. Peet what the brigands dictated. They set twenty days as the limit of time during which they would wait for the ransom and preserve our lives. No copies of these letters are at hand. What were my feelings when I wrote what seemed to me a sure death sentence for both Mrs. Tsilka and myself! These restless men stood over me and made sure I did not abuse my opportunity, and as soon as the two letters were finished they took back the unused paper and pen and ink, as was their invariable custom afterward.

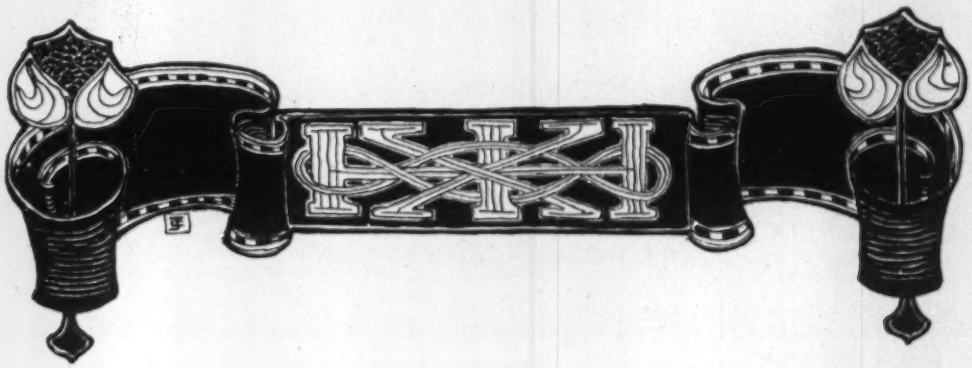
Nine Days to Live

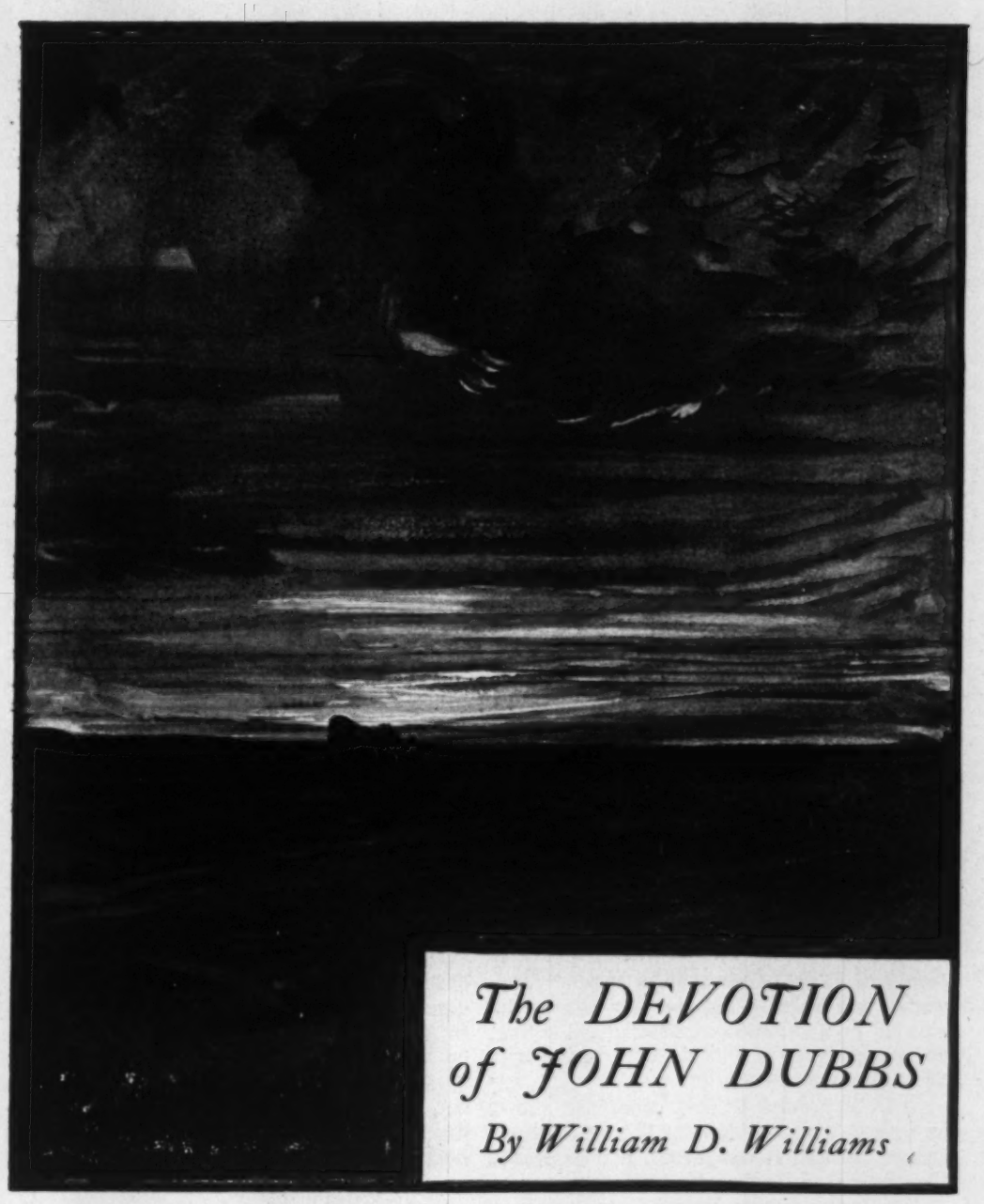
It seemed impossible that the money should be raised in those few days, yet we clung to the hope that by some miracle the attempt might prove successful. The days passed with infinite slowness while we waited for some news from the outside world, some evidence that our plea had been heard. Eleven days passed; then our dread visitors came to us again, and we perceived instantly from their ominous manner that we might expect the worst. Briefly and gruffly they told us that our attempt to reach the world had failed.

"Your man in Bansko has done nothing," they said.

It was a bitter, bitter disappointment. Eleven days of our twenty had been lost. Our hopes sank; we felt that we were condemned and forgotten. Only nine days of life left to us!

(To be continued.)





The DEVOTION of JOHN DUBBS

By William D. Williams

ILLUSTRATED BY ALBERT STERNER

PARADISE is the grimly satirical name of a desert station of the E. P. & W. Railway. A strong spring gushes out of the earth in the bottom of a gulch, and the outbursting waters go trickling down to extinction over the rocky bed. The crisp hot air drinks of the moisture so thirstily, the sand sucks it up with such greed, that, less than a mile below its source, the faint trickle ends in a deep and silent pool, from which there is no outflow.

Upon that liquid foundation the town of Paradise was built, and, doubtless, in that drought-stricken land, more than one wanderer, coming out of the hell of the desert upon that life-giving stream, passing the moist fluid over a cracked and dusty tongue, had found the name appropriate and even significant.

From the railroad a long pipe trailed over the ground to the dusty bank, where it plunged beneath the surface of the pool. A pump, standing in a flimsy board house on the right of way, clanked endlessly, and

drew out the water to an overhead tank. Locomotives halted wearily under the movable spout, and tenders were supplied for the dry miles on either side. Trainmen, hot and dusty, brown and ashy, as if they were part of the desert, gathered about the engine as it pulled slowly into place. The spout fell into place, and the water rushed out, gurgling, cool, and liquid, into the empty tanks. The drip ran outside with the force of a miniature waterfall, beneath which stood the trainmen, each in turn, and were drenched.

To the north of the town lay the desert, vast stretches of golden, shifting sands, great, barren slopes of chalk, white and dazzling in the sun, weary miles of pebbles, scorched and cindery, and on the farther edge the mining camp of Altamont. The freight wagons took four days to make the trip, from which drivers and horses emerged dust-covered, gaunt, and haggard.

The railroad wound away to the west, sixty miles to Washburn Junction, and wandered deviously through the northwestern cattle ranges to a desolate terminus at Ward. From Ward a stage ran to Altamont, 170 miles away. Freighters followed the stage road down the Sweetwater to Bitter Creek Cañon, up its defiles to where the Stinking Fork forced an entrance from the plains, across the divide to Little Bear River, and down the river to the foothills that had to be climbed to high-seated Altamont, on the borders of the desert. It was a road with plenty of water of an infinite variety—bad, worse, and worst,—but the way was an unceasing up and down, wearisome and trying, and loaded wagons took six days to the trip, and sometimes more.

Therefore John Dubbs, otherwise known as Desert Jack, still held to the desert trail. Others thought it dangerous, and expressed themselves profanely over his folly.

Jim Brown, better known in the edges of the Escondido as Shif'less Jim, came out of the mountains of East Tennessee, and, having for many years wandered about the world, became at last a citizen of Paradise. Water was free and of good quality; the sand was soft and warm, and, under the weight of the body and without exertion, hollowed itself out, making a most accommodating bed; the sky, painted with stars, was a gaudy covering; a little labor provided a sufficiency of whisky for a man who was not even ambitious of continual drunkenness; and the hospitality of the townspeople rendered starvation reasonably improbable. So Jim concluded that on this earth he would find no other place so deserving of its name, and, much to the disgust of the inhabitants, announced his intention of making it his home. There he dwelt year after year.

In the course of time word was taken to the East Tennessee mountains how Jim Brown had settled in Paradise, and the report had it that he was even rich, a respected citizen of that new great empire of the Southwest. An old and lonely widow, the energetic mother of that degenerate son, living a life of solitude in a moist and shady cove at the foot of a big knob, bent with toil, trembling with the palsy of age, heard the pleasant news of her son, and her heart felt young again, and she was sorely hungered for a sight of the face of her only child. She fretted her days away in a misery that fed upon itself until it had grown huge and imperious. In all her life it is doubtful if she had ever received a letter, and she never thought of Jim as able to write. But he was her boy, her only one, and unlimited prosperity seemed his natural heritage, nor did she question that he craved her as she desired him.

The little farm that lay in the cove, its few stock, and all its humble furnishings were sold, and the widow made her way to Paradise to end her days in the sunshine of her boy's face, to spend the golden sunset of life in an earthly Eden.

But before she arrived, an indignant outburst, caused by the unparalleled worthlessness of Shif'less Jim, had led to his reluctant departure from Paradise, and he had gone to Altamont. And as the train went puffing on its way and left her behind, surrounded by dingy, stolid faces, wherein were deep-set, unresponsive eyes, it seemed to her like the breaking of the last tie that had held her to the world she had known. She gasped and choked, and a tear slipped out and ran down her wrinkled cheek. But she was a brave old woman, and she gulped down her sorrow, and held herself steady, save for the shaking of her palsied head, as she asked of one of those nearest her, "Ain't there any of you'uns as knows my boy an' kin tell me where he is?"

It was an old, old question in Paradise.

"What's his name?" inquired Whisky Jake, whom she had addressed, taking off his wide-brimmed hat and standing before the widow, his head gallantly bared to that intense and burning sun.

Whisky was a sturdy old conservative, who kept a record of his own and private

dead by cutting notches in the stock of his gun, a method of keeping books with the grave which has fallen into disrepute.

"Why, I'm shorely 'sprised at myself," allowed the widow politely, her head bobbing about with mingled palsy and excitement. "I'm shorely a-losin' of my wits. It's Jim Brown as I'm a-lookin' for, little Jim as is my boy, an' a good un, too, if I do say it, as hadn't orter."

"Yes'm, yes'm," answered Jake; "I don't just call to mind any sech around here. I can't think as I knowed him." He stood first on one foot and then on the other, turning his hat around in his fingers like a wheel, altogether confused and cast down because of his inability to salve the heart of the widow.

Suddenly his face brightened, he fairly beamed upon the old woman, and began speaking rapidly, as if he feared some one else would be ahead of him with the information.

"Oh, I remember now, mum," he said. "I did hear as how his name was Jim Brown." Then he turned to the little crowd, so that all could share his triumph. "It's Shif—, it's Shif—". The unfortunate nickname stuck in his throat; inwardly he cursed himself for his awkwardness; the rim of his hat revolved like a wheel between his fingers; he shuffled his feet in the dust of the road, and the sweat stood out on his forehead in beady drops.

All Paradise came to his rescue, and, without a dissenting voice lied itself into the lowest depths of purgatory.

"Why, it's Jim Brown the lady's askin' after," declared Three Spot. "It's old Jim, as we was all so proud of, one of the distinguished citizens of Paradise. Shiffly Jim, the Mexicans called him, 'cause that means he don't go back on a friend, not never. Why, Whisky, we're plum ashamed of ye. Miss' Brown, we're shorely proud to know Jim's mother."

The strain was over, and the old woman was no longer ashamed to cry. Her rounded shoulders, curving down upon her sunken chest, rose and fell as she sobbed.

Then Paradise did itself proud. In triumphal procession, Mrs. Brown in the center, the townsmen streamed to the hotel. The best room was had, the belongings of the unfortunate occupant were hustled out without ceremony, and the widow was installed. All afternoon men tramped up and down the stairs and along the wooden veranda, thronging the approaches and entering the presence with a courteous, deprecatory gravity. One after another they listened with sympathetic attention to wonderful anecdotes of the childhood of Shif'less Jim, and, one after another, they lied unblushingly, telling how his maturer days were the fitting climax of the promise of his youth. There were tales of valor, stories of munificence, of a kindness that was royal in its beneficence, supplying the wants of the unfortunate with a kingly disregard of his own needs, traditions of financial success, anecdotes illustrating the shrewdness and wit of the widow's son, all poured out with an enthusiasm that made the old woman's eyes snap and sparkle and quite took away her breath with pride.

She became at home with those outcasts. She took Three Spot Charlie to her motherly heart, and her soul went out to Cherokee Kate, whose occupation was nameless, and to Mrs. O'Crool, who kept the hotel and did occasional washing for the rest of the town. These, she believed and declared, were true ladies and gentlemen. She declared Whisky Jake was a born nobleman, which he was not and never claimed to be, being the soul of humility when not crossed. She took those lost ones of Paradise under her wing, and loved them as she had not thought she could ever love any one but her boy Jim.

And thus it was that, when John Dubbs came in that night from Altamont, Paradise held a consultation in the shed room of the dance hall, and all its leading citizens were present. It was late, and Mrs. Brown, weary but happy, was asleep in the best room of the hotel, a proud smile upon her face, dreaming of her boy.

"It'll never do in the world," declared Three Spot. "Some galoot'll be sure to tell her, and then where'll you be?"

"I'm sure I don't know whatever to do," moaned Whisky.

"Why don't you send her on to Altamont?" suggested John Dubbs.

"I don't mean it no ways invidious, Jack," said Three Spot; "but of all the d—d fool idees that I ever heard, that's the d—dest. Send her on there and let her see what kind of a d—d skunk that boy of her's reelly is? I reckon not."

"I'm clean bewildered at you, Three Spot," declared Kate tartly. "You been a-wearin' britches as long as you have, an' not know nothin' about wimmen yet. Why, it's plain scandalous, an' nothin' else."

"What d'you mean, Kate?" inquired Three Spot meekly.

"That old woman'll just think that boy

of her'n is an angel of light, an' she'll think we've been mean an' jealous, an' haven't said half enough good things about him. She ain't a-goin' back on him, an' him her boy. Not much."

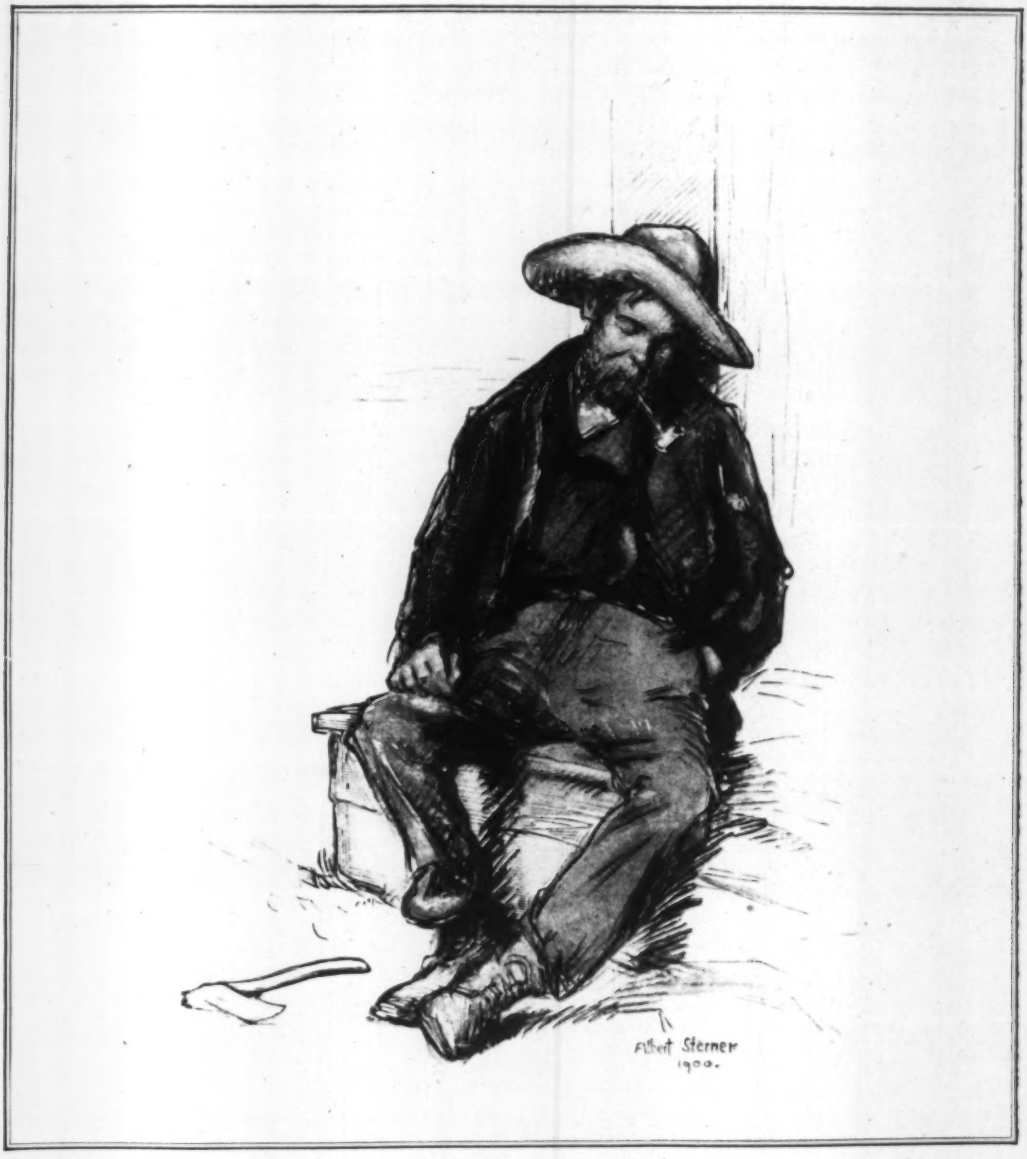
And it was so ordered, but when John Dubbs offered to take her across the desert in his freight wagon, there was much opposition. Therefore it was duly moved and seconded and unanimously resolved that she go by way of Ward. A subscription was taken up and a sum raised sufficient to defray her expenses.

Now in that mass-meeting Kate was able to sway the rest at her will, but when Mrs. Brown, longing to reach that son of hers who had so justified her motherly pride came to be in opposition, then Greek met Greek.

"There's Mr. Dubbs." Desert Jack blushed at the prefix. "There's Mr. Dubbs," the widow urged, "has crossed the desert more'n once a week for years. Why can't I do it once in a whole life?"

"But, Miss' Brown," Three Spot objected, "it ain't reckoned safe."

"It don't seem noways skeery when Mr. Dubbs he's been a-doin' of it this long an' ain't got hurt none."



"Shif'less Jim"

"It don't take much longer to go round by Ward."

"Gentlemen, it's my boy I'm a-goin' to see, and I'm a-goin' the shortest way."

The obstinacy of a woman must have its own way. Paradise made preparation as for an army departing from its base of supplies, but Jack made himself heard, declaring he couldn't carry all they were fixing not if he dropped his whole load. He was willing to accept a bottle of whisky—that might come in handy, and, as for Mrs. Brown, she could have an extra keg of water, not being used to going dry, but the balance of the plunder must just stay where it was.

They started so early in the morning that the first brightening of the eastern sky was barely perceptible. Mrs. Brown sat in the driver's seat, beside John Dubbs. Her eyes snapped and sparkled vivaciously, her wrinkled face beamed with pleasure. She looked first at the driver, then out over the desert. She chattered incessantly. John, silent with the dumbness that possesses all who live in vast and empty spaces, listened, answering briefly, but his heart warmed toward that indomitable old woman.

He dropped into a reverie, and she, noting his silence, turned toward him, and for a moment ceased talking, observing him carefully in the wan light.

"I'm afeerd you'uns ain't a-feelin' well," she observed with tender solicitude.

"Oh, I'm all right," asserted John, rousing himself. "I'm as peert an' fresh as kin be."

But the woman doubted. "If you'uns stomach gits to hurtin'," she said, "an' that's what mostly hurts a man, if you'uns'll let me know, I kin fix up a tea as'll sot you up in a minit. I've got the airbs right here in my sack."

"I'm all right," persisted John. "It's jest that I like to hear you a-talkin'. It makes me think how I used to set an' listen at home, when mother'd talk to me."

It is very sad the way gray-haired wanderers talk of home. Never does it mean any other than the place of their childhood, where first their hearts took root in the earth. We are a nation of strangers; we are surrounded by men whom we first knew as men; we go to strange places, having lost the childish art of breaking through, of going beneath the surface; and the places remain strange forever. We establish ourselves, we marry, we raise families, our houses are the homes of our children, who will grow up to quit them, to become strangers as we also are strangers; but our own homes are far away, across broad prairies, on the other side of the rivers, beyond the mountains, farther away than the drifting clouds. We build up a nation, we conquer alien races, we acquire wealth and honors, and are lonesome forevermore. So, too, that desert driver, turning gray under the yellow dust that sifted over him perpetually, had no other home than that one of long ago, where in childhood he sat at the feet of his mother and she talked to him.

They grew very companionable, those two, in the midst of that waterless solitude.

"I never seed so good a boy as that Jim of mine," prattled the old woman.

"I right frequent reckoned as he'd been an amazin' good boy," John answered, lying without a blush.

"I'm curis to know what made him change off an' go to Altamont, an' him so much thought of in Paradise."

"Well, mum," said John, with ready invention, "I've heerd him say as how his financial interests over there needed lookin' after closer'n he could do it from Paradise. Them pesky mines is all-fired onsartin', an' a feller's to his neck in wealth one day, an' the next he's busted flat."

The driver was hedging against the future. And so it went on, one lie calling for another, and the driver cheerfully answering each demand. He set his jaws together hard, beneath his breath he swore that he would roast in everlasting fire before he would give pain to that old woman, who looked after him as if she had been his own mother.

The norther blew up in the afternoon of the second day. First the swelter of heat became stifling. The distant purple slopes swam upon the undulating waves of a pallid haze. Sand pillars, crooked as a broken stick, moved about, gyrating awkwardly, going from place to place. Sweat ran down the bellies of the horses, and between their thighs and under each strap and band of the harness a lather of dirty foam appeared. The driver wiped his face constantly upon his sleeve, and swore beneath his breath as the salty perspiration trickled into his eyes. The old woman took off her sunbonnet, fanning herself with it vigorously, while loose wisps of thin, gray hair were displaced by the motion and floated down along her narrow shoulders. A great lassitude fell upon them, and they were silent for many minutes.

"I'm skeered of all this yere," suddenly

ejaculated Mrs. Brown, starting up as if she had waked out of a sleep.

"'Tain't nothin' but a little old, pesky storm a-comin' up," John reassured her cheerfully, though the sternness of his eyes belied the smile upon his lips.

"I hope I ain't brung you'uns no bad luck," said she regretfully.

"You couldn't bring no one any bad luck," replied the driver affectionately. "I wish I had you around all the time, an' then I'd have good luck."

The widow blushed with pleasure. "I'd just love to stop with you'uns," she began timidly, blushing more furiously than ever.

"You wouldn't love to stay a bit more'n I'd love to have you," John asserted warmly.

"But, law sakes, there's Jim, an' him my own boy," said she, covered with confusion, quaking at her own boldness. "I reckon he'll want me, an' I don't know as you'uns keer so mighty much, anyhow."

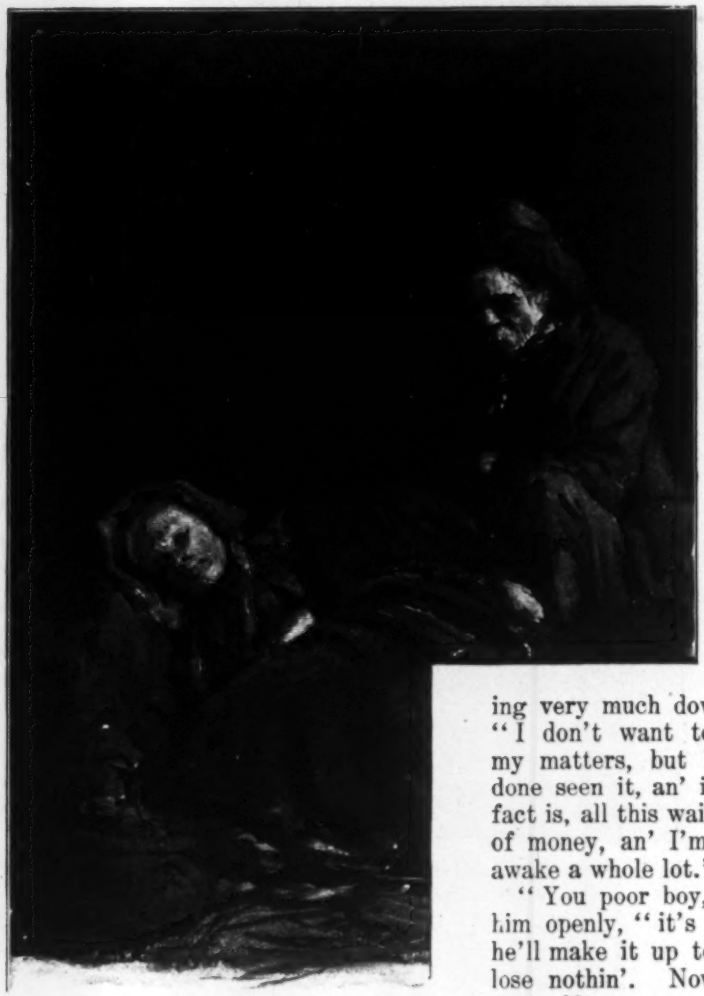
The haze rose thicker and thicker, until it grew to be a great, opaque wall, dividing the world into two parts. A herd of antelope raced by, going south; but, except for this, the desert was empty, and its silence was like something material, vast, and oppressive. Then with a great rush and howl the wind came down upon them, bursting tumultuously out of the north. The sand blew against them, cutting spitefully into the skin, filling their eyes with dust and grit, piling loftily above them in mid-air, until it shut out the light of the sun, and the desert was black, as if it had been night.

John had turned his horses until they stood with their heads away from the blast. He quickly stowed Mrs. Brown in the cavernous depths that lay beneath the wagon sheet, and busied himself in tying down the loose ends that flapped and beat about so madly in the rushing winds. Then, all having been made secure, he crawled in at the mouth of the canvas-covered cavern and gave cheer to the widow. He talked of the storm, bawling at the top of his voice, striving to make himself heard above the resounding, elemental uproar, speaking from a personal point of view, as if there were some peculiar intimacy of relation between himself and that part of the world wherein he had dwelt so long and so lonesomely, as if he were responsible for the desert elements, blameable for their perverseness, and entitled to praise for whatever of comfort could be extracted from the situation. But, most of all, he talked to soothe and cheer a withered old woman, who found cause for secret alarm in the mysterious, unnatural course of a rainless tempest so dark and threatening as that; who was frightened in that lonesome place by the mad howling of the wind as it rushed along so gustily; who found a source of fear in the everlasting beating of the sand as it flew southward, storm-borne, in the dust-dry, windy strife, when nature denied the relief of rain to the tortured and convulsed elements. It was nothing at all, John said; a nothing, not even a trifle; a thing of natural and everyday occurrence, to which he would have given not a single thought save for the annoyance it occasioned to this lady in his charge. Indeed, it was less than nothing, a desirable occurrence, since it brought to the heated air a term of coolness sweeter than honey, and the black night of cloud was a relief, soothing and pleasant to eyes that had been dazzled and hurt by the glare of the sun. Had he but thought of it, so he said, he would have wished for just such a modest norther, so she might see his desert at its best. The taciturn man had grown suddenly talkative and chattered incessantly until the real night came, scarce distinguishable from the false darkness of the day, and the widow slept.

For three days the wind blew incessantly, tearing down great dunes of sand and building them anew in other places, filling up the dim, desert trail which was not to be opened up again, covering the old, accustomed springs and the clay tanks, where bitter water gathered scantily in pools and lay from rain to rain, burying the moist draws with their coarse grasses which the half-starved horses ate so greedily. The same storm opened also new springs, but as yet no man knew where they were; it laid bare other draws for the grasses of other seasons, but hunger waits not so long for its food; and John, who knew what was going on in the desert around him, who could foretell the changes that would make him a stranger to its once familiar surfaces and slopes, felt nothing short of despair.

During those long three days, which seemed as if they would never end, John waited on the widow. When she was dry, he put water to her lips, drawn lavishly, as if from an unfailing source. When she grew hungry, the man had a positive genius for providing food. If she became dull with the long inaction, he had this and that to tell, stories of desperate battles, of wild adventures among Indians and desperados, descriptions of strange places that he had visited, reminiscences of

"THEY LISTENED WITH SYMPATHETIC ATTENTION"



"When she was sleepy, he sat motionless and silent"

remarkable men he had known; and if she wearied of the grave, he developed a talent for the humorous, and kept her amused. Most of all, he was a good listener, and could provoke conversation. When she was sleepy, he sat motionless and silent, statuesque as an Indian following the war trail. He divined her wants as if by instinct, and supplied them without waiting to have them made known. The widow declared she was growing fat and lazy.

Late the third day John's voice failed him, his throat was that choked up with sand, he could not speak above a whisper, so he declared. He was very languid, moving weakly, as if oppressed by illness. Light had measurably returned to the desert world, and the widow, looking upon his face, was shocked to find it so worn and haggard.

"Why, Mr. Dubbs," she exclaimed, "whatever is the matter?"

"There ain't nothin' the matter," declared John, smiling at her faintly.

"Yes, there is," the widow asserted, "an' I want to know what it is."

John laughed heartily at the idea, and said he was fit as a fiddle, all but his voice, and he had seen some people that would have been better off if they had been dumb.

"But there is something the matter with you'uns, John Dubbs," persisted the widow, "an' I've jest got to know what it is."

Then John surrendered unconditionally. "Well," he said, looking very much downcast and embarrassed, "I don't want to pester you none with my matters, but I reckon as how you've done seen it, an' it can't be helped. The fact is, all this waitin' loses me a whole lot of money, an' I'm that poor it's kept me awake a whole lot."

"You poor boy," the old woman pitied him openly, "it's jest too bad. But Jim, he'll make it up to you, so you'uns shan't lose nothin'. Now, don't you'uns pester yourself no more whatever, for Jim, he'll make it up."

"Yes, shore," answered John, still smiling; "I declare I'm plum foolish that I didn't think of it, for Jim, he's jest the sort that'll never think nothin' of payin' me extry."

"Now, don't you worry; for Jim, he'll make it up," the old woman repeated.

When the horses were hitched in, they were gaunt and lean, with the stomachs of greyhounds, and then Mrs. Brown first learned that they must pull the wagon to water before they could drink. The kegs held little enough for two humans, so John Dubbs declared. And here it was her faith in Desert Jack received its first rude shock.

"I declare we might divide with them there poor critters, an' then they'll have little enough," she cried out hotly.

But John Dubbs, instead of answering her, sat on his seat laughing until the tears ran down from his eyes, laughing and

holding his sides, until he doubled over, convulsed.

"Here we've et an' drunk, an' drunk an' et, an' filled our bellies until they're nigh onto bustin, an' them there poor horse critters ain't had nothin' at all."

John Dubbs slapped his hand upon his knee and hawhawed out loud, but said never a word.

"I declare to gracious," snapped the widow, "men's poor ornery critters as I've allers knowed, but you'uns is about the devilishest of the lot as I've ever seed."

Then she threw her thin shoulders back, sitting up very rigid and straight, and far over on her side of the seat. She gave her sunbonnet a hitch, setting it forward over her eyes, and relapsed into a gloomy silence.

John Dubbs looked at her out of the corners of his eyes, and, seeing she was determined not to notice him, he sighed, licked his lips with the tip of his tongue, and whipped up the horses. He looked out over the desert, staring at it fiercely, as if to put it out of countenance, drawing in the muscles about his eyes, frowning prodigiously, and, then, whether or not he had found that for which he looked, he slouched down in the seat wearily, falling in a heap, dusty and shapeless.

That night they made a dry camp, and Mrs. Brown was so affected by the suffering of the horses she could not eat, but went supperless to bed. Neither did she entirely recover her regard for the driver, even refusing water when he first offered it, but later taking the cup from his hand, and saying very solemnly, "I misdoubt if I ain't judged you'uns too harshly. We're sinners, the whole kit an' bilin' of us, but we're what God made us, an' I don't reckon he meant we should be hard on what he made. A man must be looked at up one side an' down the other, an' there's likely to be a heap of good in the meanest he-critter on earth. I reckon when a man gits as thirsty as you'uns has been, he jest can't stand it to give up water as he'll maybe need for himself after a little, an' I'm reel sorry I said what I did."

John looked down into the old woman's face, smiling and licking his lips with the tip of his tongue. He bent over and whispered huskily, "I'm mighty glad you ain't clean gone back on me, Miss' Brown. I declare I don't know any one as I think so much of, an' I want you to think a whole lot of me, too."

"Thinks a heap of me, does he?" said the widow to herself. "Thinks a whole lot of me. Don't look much like it, an' him a-laughin' at me, the same as he did. But I don't know. A man's a queer critter, take him at his best, an' I don't know." She sat and mused, but she was a wise old woman, wherefore she said nothing more to John Dubbs.

The road had disappeared: not a mark of wheel or a track of horse did they see on the face of the desert. But this was no cause of disquietude, so said the driver, who surely ought to know; it was a common event, he said, and the desert wayfarer was expected to know the details of the land, the location of the springs, and the places where the tanks lay hidden in the hollows between the slopes, quite as well as if they were marked off on the palm of his hand. For this reason, he explained, he drove with unusual care, searching the earth with seeking eyes, which thus became bloodshot and were sunken in his head until they gleamed like coals of fire in the black throat of a cave.

One day John asked Mrs. Brown to drink sparingly. He had, only a few hours before, been telling how much less than they thought was the amount of water consumed by the drinking of thirsty people, so that the vessels that held the lives of persons shipwrecked upon the ocean, and the stores of those who were in desert places lasted surprisingly, and seemed to be renewed as if it were by a miracle. And now the request was haltingly made, the man's embarrassment showing guilt as plainly as if he had been detected in a petty theft. The widow was surprised and shocked, but, hiding her emotion, she promised obedience. That night, in her silent prayer to God, she asked to be kept from unjust suspicion of the driver, who was to her so like a son. But for all her efforts, she believed John had begun to grudge her the water she drank, and she was afraid.

The next day the driver's mind began to wander, and he talked in a husky whisper, foolishly, about springs that did not exist, and water holes and tanks that were mere imaginations of the brain. The old woman easily called him back from his dreams, which, he explained, were caused by the intense heat, aggravated by a foolish habit he had acquired, being so much alone, of dozing in the daytime and talking aloud to himself. He was also much troubled with an obstinate bleeding of the lips, so that he was forever sucking the blood into his mouth and swallowing it. Because of these things the widow was much distressed, but the

driver still smiled and showed eagerness to have her talk to him, and was so kind and attentive that she was reassured and her alarm died out.

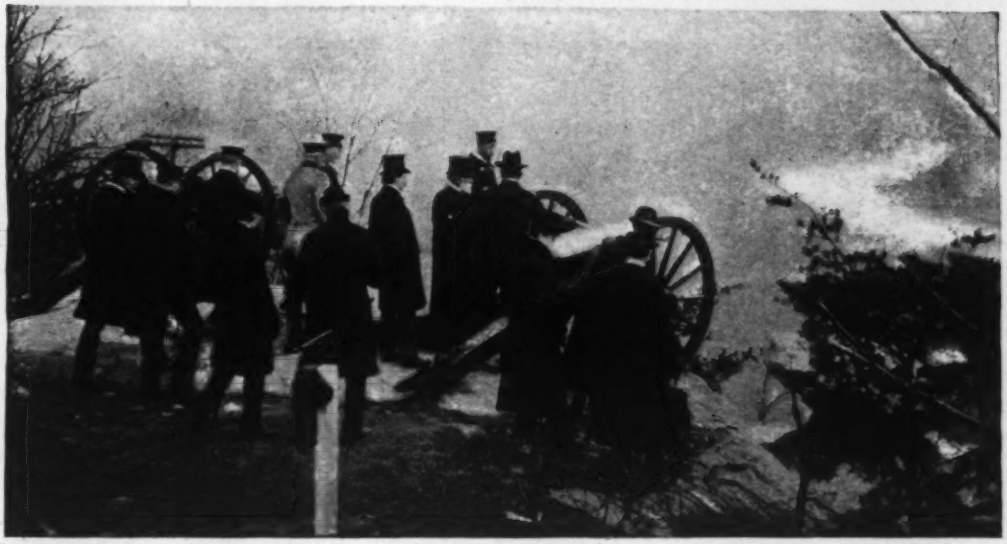
It was on the day following that one of the horses fell to the ground and refused to rise. The driver, who was sitting on the seat, a slack and dusty heap, comatose and almost breathless, was thrown forward by the sudden halting of the wagon, until it was as much as the widow could do to hold him in place. When she shook him and called his name he opened his eyes, stared around stupidly, either seeing nothing, or else seeing what did not exist, and whispered hoarsely in a voice which he tried to make loud and rollicking, "Well, here we are at last, an' I'm d—d glad. Take out the horses, boys, an' I'll jest go to sleep a minit." Then he fell back upon the seat and slept.

The widow shook him by the arm, but he made no response. She shouted in his ear and shook him soundly, yet still he did not wake. Then, as she pushed him back and forth, his head slipped off the seat and fell down, hanging limply by the neck, the lower jaw dropped, and his mouth was open. The old woman screamed with horror and pity. The man's mouth was black throughout and dry as dust, his tongue was black and swollen, and little bloody streaks zigzagged across it irregularly.

The widow took the cup, and, climbing over the wagon to the water-keg, opened the faucet. A few drops ran out slowly and then stopped. She lifted the canteens, but they were empty. She crawled back to the seat, and, lifting the driver's head, placed it in her lap and dripped the water between his lips. He sucked at it greedily, mouthed for more, and began to whisper. She bent her head and listened, hearing the same foolish words of springs that did not exist, of rivers and lakes that were the unsubstantial creations of his terrible longing, of water, water, water, when there was no water. "An' me abusin' of him like I did," she said, "an' him such a man as that, a-givin' of everything to me, an' me not even related. I wish I could tell him I know."

The second horse had laid down by its mate to die. The heat was a material, palpable oppression. The purple slopes were swaying up and down, afloat upon a swelling and sinking sea of haze. Afar off the chalk hills shone ghastly white, like tombstones. The widow, her head bobbing about with the palsy of age, bareheaded, her thin hair released from its fastenings, floating down her narrow, sloping shoulders, held the driver's head in her lap, and looked this way and that upon an empty and waterless land.

In Altamont, where the air was cool and the icy waters of many snow-fed streams went dashing down the mountain sides, and pines and aspens grew upon the hills, Shiftless Jim went his shiftless way, undisturbed by any longing for better things, and, if he ever knew of his mother's search and of the fruitless devotion of John Dubbs, he gave no outward sign.



Photograph by Lazarnick

ON LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN

PRINCE HENRY'S AMERICAN IMPRESSIONS

BY ROBLEY D. EVANS

Rear-Admiral U. S. N. & Special Aide-de-Camp in Personal Attendance on His Royal Highness

THERE are two excuses for the writing of this article. One is that the Editor of McCLURE'S MAGAZINE asked me for it; the other that Prince Henry asked me to do it. The Editor set forth that I was the man to tell the story of the pleasant visit of his Royal Highness to the United States, because I was the only American constantly with the Prince; that I was his friend; and that, consequently, I best could report the Prince's impressions of the American people and the American people's impression of the Prince. As for the royal request, that was put more bluntly.

"Evans," said the Prince one day on the train, "all this ought to make a good article for you. I hope you will write one about it."

Friendliness of the Prince

Very friendly? Well, friendliness was the key to the spirit and significance of the whole visit, and especially of my part in it. My appointment as aide-de-camp to accompany Prince Henry was at the request of the German Emperor, and it was, no doubt, as the result of the friendship formed at Kiel with the Emperor and with his brother that the German ambassador was directed to ask the President to detail me to Prince Henry's suite. It was a pleasant duty. Had it been simply an honor, the service might have been trying, but the friendship that prompted the assignment made the service a pleasure from beginning to end. In other words, we had a good time; and even the slight unpleasantnesses that occurred were turned by good-fellowship into what was akin to fun.

Once, for instance, at Somerset, Kentucky, when some "Anarchists" (I guess they were anarchists; at least that's what I called them at the time) banged on our car crying, "Get up, Henry. Come out," at two o'clock in the morning, I first prayed that the train pull out; when it wouldn't, I got up and, hearing the Prince disturbed and moving about in his room, went to the window and explained that the Prince was not in that car, but was up front in the first car. Our friends in the first car didn't appreciate it, but the Prince did. He thanked me for what he called, with a droll choice of language, "Your—your—er—thoughtfulness. Evans."

The Prince strikes the Personal Note

My welcome to him was formal of course. I greeted him in the name of the Navy of the United States, and said that it gave me great pleasure to see him in the great Republic. His reply immediately gave the informal and personal tone which prevailed to the end. It was the occasion of his life, he said, and then he added the intimate note; he was glad that an old friend should be the first to welcome him. When I remarked that he had not changed a bit since I last saw him at Kiel, he laughed.

"Now, Evans, be honest," he said. "Look at the gray hairs in my whiskers."

The ice was broken by this and the general laugh that arose. I presented my staff, who withdrew to let us have a few private words. Then we all went up on the upper bridge. He presented his staff; I the three newspaper men—or, to be more accurate, two (one was lost in the shuffle)—who were the first civilians to have a friendly conversation with the Prince. As we proceeded on up the bay, the chat continued to be free and easy, the Prince noticing everything and making comment unrestrained on all that he saw.

I pointed out Shooter's Island, where the "Meteor" lay waiting to be launched. He picked out the Statue of Liberty to admire. Then the city rose clear before us. Somebody called his attention to the sky-scrapers.

Here to see People, not Sky-scrapers

"I see," he said, nodding pleasantly. "I have had my eye on them for some time. They are imposing, but certainly they are also very ugly. But then I have seen tall buildings in other cities of the world. I came to this country to see the American people."

There he struck another note of the visit. It was ever the people with him.

As the "Kronprinz" approached the foot of Thirty-fourth Street, North River, the Prince's attention was distracted from the elaborate decorations and preparations to receive him ashore by six or eight tugs that ran up abreast of the ocean greyhound, and, putting their noses against her starboard quarter, gently, firmly, and evenly turned her against the current of the tide and stream, and laid her up to her dock. The Prince watched this operation as if fascinated. The ease, facility, and precision with which those tugs were handled made him exclaim, and he declared he never had seen anything like it anywhere.

When the gangway, draped in American and German colors, was in place, I went down it with my staff, and again formally welcomed his Royal Highness.

"Prince Henry," I said, "it is a great pleasure to welcome you to American soil."

And again the Prince answered personally: "It is a great pleasure that you should be the first to welcome me."

Coghlan and "Hoch der Kaiser"

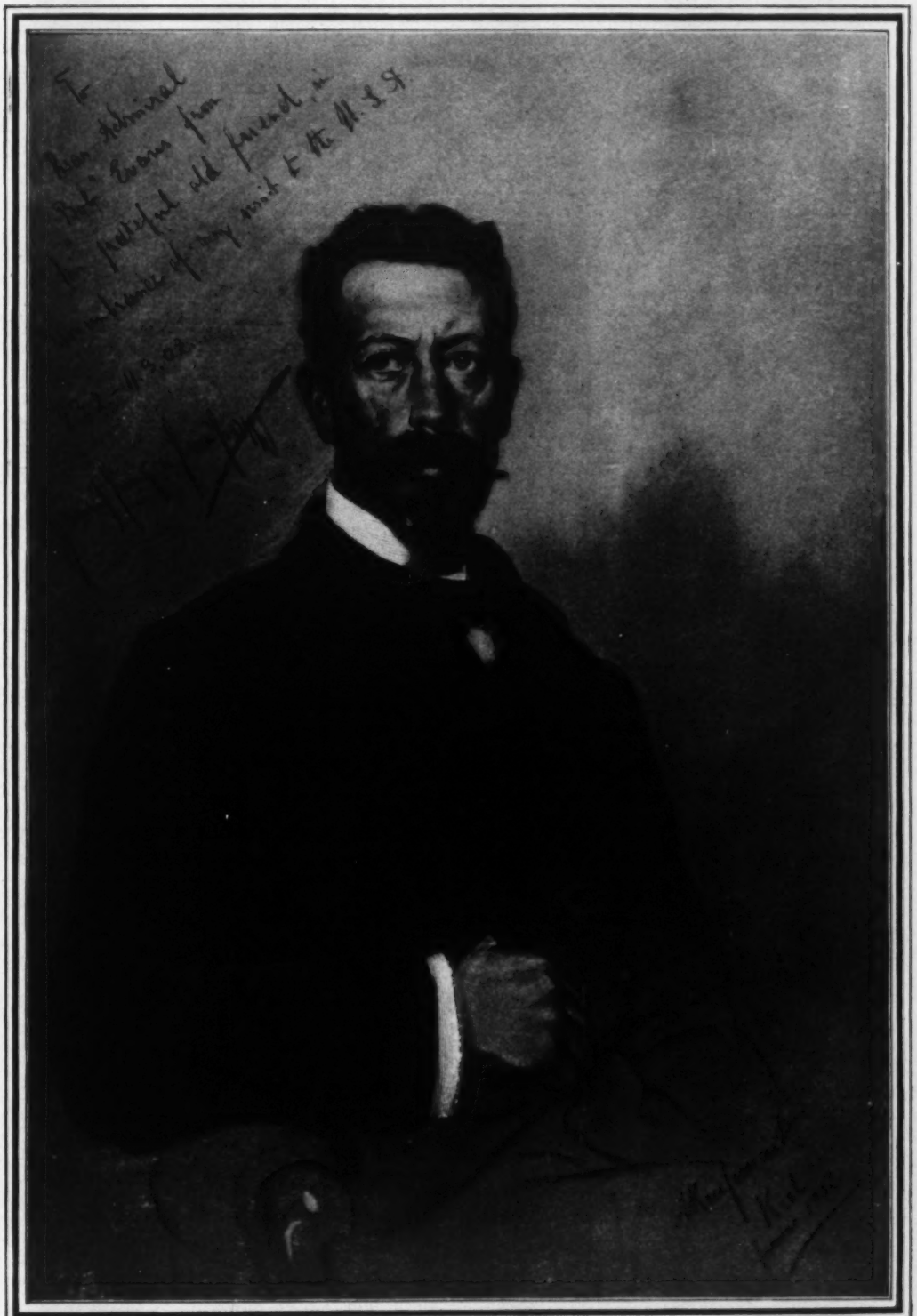
He then went aboard the imperial yacht "Hohenzollern," and the reception was an accomplished fact. The customary exchanges of courtesy followed:—calls by the German ambassador, by Admiral Barker, commandant at the Navy Yard; by General Brooke, commanding the Department of the East; by Mayor Low; and return calls on these officials by the Prince. At the Navy Yard he saw Captain Coghlan. The Prince shook his hand cordially, said he was pleased to meet him, and showed that the unfortunate incident, when Coghlan repeated the verses "Hoch der Kaiser," was closed and no longer a cause of irritation to German naval officers.

The Prince the First of Sailors

It was late when these calls were all finished, but the Prince insisted that dinner could wait; he should visit my flagship. And I was glad he did, since it gave me a chance to see how he inspected a ship. He went through her as a good housekeeper goes through a house—from double-bottom to bridge. And he saw everything. During that inspection it was evident to those with him that he is a master of his profession; I regard him as the head of it. He ran over the machinery in the steam steering room; at a glance he knew how the whole thing worked. The same way with the ammunition hoists; his eye picked out the new features every time. It was pleasant, at the end, to have him express, as he did, his admiration for the ship and her condition.

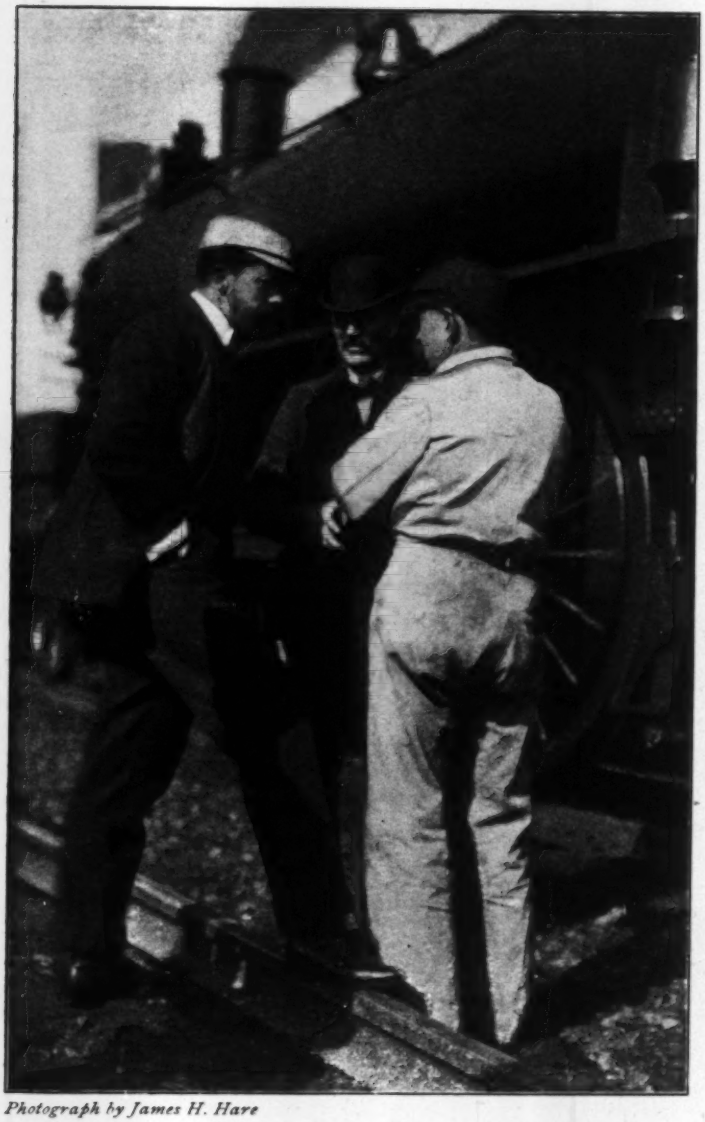
The Prince and the German-Americans

That night the Prince had his first glimpse of German-America. He visited the Deutches Verein, and there heard for the first time in America the German singing which was a feature of his whole trip. The song commemorating the sinking of a German torpedo-



PRINCE HENRY

His gift portrait to Admiral Evans



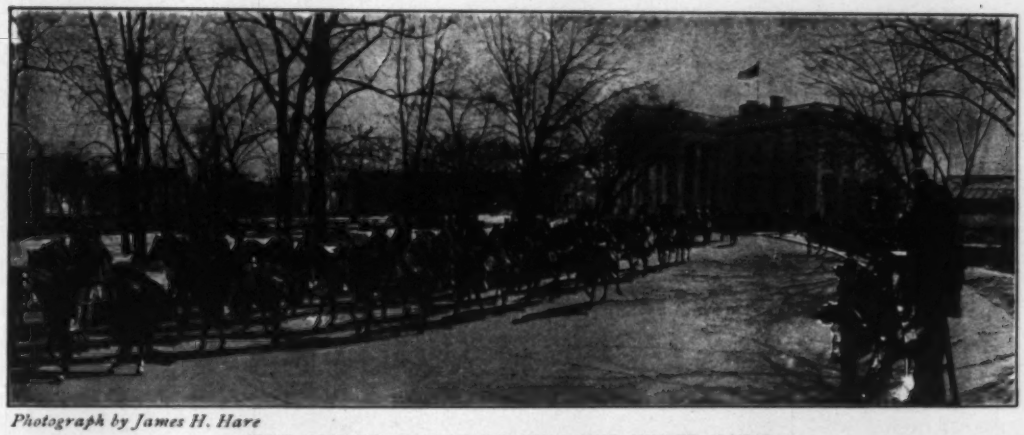
Photograph by James H. Hare

"EVIDENT THAT HE IS A MASTER OF HIS PROFESSION"

boat off the coast of China was superbly rendered, and repeated at the request of the Prince. He reviewed the torchlight procession of the Germans from the balcony of the fifth story of the club, and it was a scene not easily forgotten by those who witnessed it. Park Avenue, as far as the eye could reach, was a dense mass of Germans, with a blaze of light through the middle of the street. As each club came before the balcony, its members cheered the Prince and saluted. Each salute was returned by him. One of his aides stood by with watch in hand timing the men as they marched past, and, after twenty-five counts, reported to the Prince that they were marching by at the rate of 200 a minute, and that the end of the procession would pass at a certain time—which it did within fifteen seconds. This shows how carefully they were watching everything. When the end of the procession approached, I said to Prince Henry: "If you will kindly step to the end of the balcony, after the procession has passed, the people would like to have a look at you." At this time every inch of space was filled for many blocks up and down the street, and when the Prince appeared there rose a German-American roar that will never be forgotten, and must clearly have indicated to the Prince the nature of his welcome to the metropolitan city.

Let Germans be Loyal Americans

Now of course the Germans among us interested the German Prince very personally, but he was interested in them as Americans. Immense numbers of them appeared everywhere, and he inquired for their welfare; but the answer that pleased him best from the rest of us was that they made such good citizens, and from them that they were doing well by America. In every public speech to them he said that they could best show their loyalty to the Fatherland by being loyal to the United States, the country of their adoption, and their reply, that this was their sentiment also and their highest purpose, gave him a gratification that was plainly genuine. Though he had himself always well in hand, he is as emotional and sensitive as a girl, and he showed his feeling whenever he caught sight of the German veterans of the Franco-Prussian war. In Milwaukee, where a hundred or more of these old soldiers of '70-'71 were lined up, he and his officers



Photograph by James H. Hare

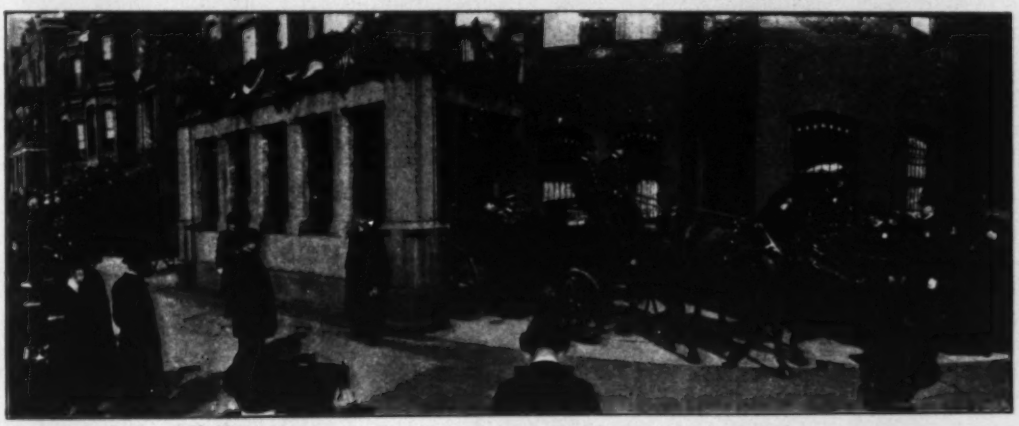
THE PRINCE'S ESCORT LEAVING THE WHITE HOUSE

stopped to speak to them, and here and always these greetings were touching and kind.

Two National Courtesies Highly Appreciated

Two courtesies of an international significance which were highly appreciated by Prince Henry occurred, one at Washington, the other at the launching. The first visit to the national capital was short and formal, really a call on the President. And that meeting of the Emperor's brother and President Roosevelt was private—what was said by them no one knows. All we are sure of is that after it the two men were friends, as appeared whenever they were together. But after the call at the White House, the Prince drove to the Capitol, and it was the visit to the Senate and the complimentary courtesy of that body which impressed him, as I have said. It had been arranged, simply, that he was to go to the diplomatic gallery with his suite. When we arrived at the Capitol we were ushered into the Vice-President's room, and the suite was taken up to the gallery. His Royal Highness, however, was conducted by Senators Frye, Lodge, and Morgan out upon the floor of the Senate. Senator Frye invited him to take the Vice-President's seat and preside. This the Prince declined, but a seat at the left and beside the president of the Senate he did accept, and the unusual courtesy of it, perfectly understood by the Prince, brought home to him the truly friendly hospitality of the nation.

The other incident was the next day, Tuesday, February 25th. The President's and the Prince's parties united in Jersey City, the two special trains being housed in the Pennsylvania Railroad depot. A special ferry-boat had been arranged by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and on her the entire party was taken to Shooter's Island, flying the President's personal flag at the main and



Photograph by James H. Hare

THE PRESIDENT LEAVING THE GERMAN EMBASSY

Photograph copyright by Gessford, New York

ROBLEY D. EVANS, REAR-ADMIRAL U. S. N.

Special aide in personal attendance on Prince Henry

Prince Henry's royal standard at the fore, with the American flag amidships. It was a thick, foggy morning, and the fleet at Tompkinsville did not discover the presence of the President and his distinguished guest until they were close alongside the "Illinois." Then the rails were quickly manned, and twenty-one guns fired for the President. After a look at the fleet the ferryboat proceeded to Shooter's Island, and the party landed for the launching. It was here that the President showed the Prince a delicate international compliment which few noticed, but which his Royal Highness thoroughly appreciated. The naval militia of the State of New York, under their able commander, Cap-

tain Miller, had a guard of honor composed of two companies stationed on the dock, where the distinguished guests were to land from the ferryboat, and President Roosevelt, placing Prince Henry on the left, indicated that their salute of honor was for him, Prince Henry, and extended to him by the President of the United States. The Prince returned the salute of this well-organized naval militia, and you could see by his manner that he appreciated it.

Admiral Evans and the Meteor's Flag

That the launching of the yacht and the christening by Miss Alice Roosevelt were successful everybody knows. It certainly was gratifying to the Prince and to the Emperor, and they have expressed their sentiments as to this. The little by-play about which flag should be raised as the good ship made her first plunge was of no importance. The question whether the German flag or the Stars and Stripes should fly happened to be put to me by one of the German officers, and since it was not for me to decide, I did not undertake to settle the question. All I did was to suggest a common-sense view of it by asking whether the ship had been paid for and delivered. When the answer was that she was not, I suggested that she would seem to be an American vessel until she passed under German control on her way home off Sandy Hook somewhere. My suggestion was adopted, and that was all there was to it.

Open Carriages in the Rain

When the party returned from the "Meteor," lunch was served on board the "Hohenzollern," with the President and Miss Roosevelt and many other distinguished Americans as guests. It was very cheery, and the toasts across the table were very pretty. After lunch, as soon as the President had taken his departure, Prince Henry started for the City Hall, to receive the freedom of the city of New York. It was blowing a northeast gale, with rain and occasional snow, and in order to make the trip as easy as possible the Prince was taken in a Navy Yard tug down to the Battery. At this point occurred one of the incidents which had such influence in shaping American sentiment toward Prince Henry. As the tug drew up to the landing, Prince Henry noticed the long line of carriages all closed, and the dripping multitude facing the northeast storm. Turning to me he said:

"Evans, please have the carriages opened. If the American people can stand in the rain to see me, I can surely sit in the rain to see them."

The Winning of the Crowds

The cheering of the crowd—and such cheers and such glad faces they were—began as soon as the first carriage was being opened, and so we rode to the City Hall in our special full-dress uniforms, drenched to the skin, but in this respect no worse off than the honest Americans who were welcoming the Prince. It was a pleasure at this time to watch the crowd and see the serious expressions on their faces; then to observe how quickly these changed to smiles as they caught a glimpse of the Prince's face. It was the most striking thing I ever saw. Repeated elsewhere and often thereafter, it showed me that it was the personality of the man that was winning them and not any idle curiosity about the Prince. He captured them the moment they saw his face—everybody—big and little, young and old.

Curiosity turned into Personal Interest

Throughout the cruise around the country there was not an untoward incident; and this success was due, I think, to three distinct causes—the attractive personality of the Prince himself, the temper of the people, and the perfection of the preparations made for the visit. The Prince personally has charm, and he really had a friendly feeling for our people which he displayed specifically several times, but which was so obvious always that the people seemed to feel it. I often saw curiosity turn into genuine interest when the crowd caught sight of the Prince. He understood the democratic spirit of us all, and that caught the people every time. It seemed to me that he never forgot that he was a prince, yet never remembered it.

The Prince's Safety

As to the preparations, they were elaborate, detailed, and, as the event showed, complete. The bodily safety of the guest was the first thing secured. The President laid that down as the prime requisite; all else was to be made subordinate to that end. Chief Wilkie had supreme charge; and his preparations were systematic and thoroughgoing. With the cordial assistance

of the governors, the mayors, and the police of the states, cities, and towns visited, ample protection was planned long in advance. Every anarchist of note was shadowed for days before the Prince's arrival; and during his stay many of these fellows were enjoying, I have no doubt, free board at the expense of the states, learning of the efficacy of *habeas corpus* proceedings only after the Prince was gone, too late for their appreciation. As the special train sailed along on its cruise, each town we approached to visit telegraphed to Wilkie the state of things, and he and I translated and read these reports, sizing up in each case the situation before us. But there was no threat of danger or alarm of any kind, unless you count a telegram which said: "Turn back the Prince's train at once; he will be shot tomorrow at one o'clock." We didn't count that. Anybody who wished to kill the Prince would not advertise his intention to us, and we threw the warning into the waste basket.

For comfort and luxury, the special train on which he traveled made a lasting impression upon the Prince and his suite. Prince Henry said: "I have seen the best equipment on Russian railroads, and they are the best in Europe; but I have never seen or imagined that a train like this could be put together."

Negro Melodies—Booker Washington

The first request made by Prince Henry after being received in New York was that I should arrange to give him some of the old Southern melodies, if possible, sung by the negroes; that he was passionately fond of them, and had been all his life—not the rag-time songs, but the old negro melodies. Several times during his trip I endeavored to carry out his wishes, with more or less success; but, finally, at the Waldorf-Astoria, the Hampton singers presented themselves in one of the reception-rooms and gave him a recital of Indian and negro melodies. He was charmed.

And while I was talking to him just after a Sioux Indian had sung a lullaby, he suddenly turned and said, "Isn't that Booker T. Washington over there?" I recognized Washington and replied that it was, and he said: "Evans, would you mind presenting him to me? I know how some of your people feel about Washington, but I have always had great sympathy with the African race, and I want to meet the man I regard as the leader of that race." So I went at once to Washington and told him that the Prince wished him to be presented, and took him myself and presented him to the Prince. Booker Washington sat down and talked with him for fully ten minutes, and it was a most interesting conversation—one of the most interesting I ever heard in my life. The ease with which Washington conducted himself was very striking, and I only accounted for it afterwards when I remembered that he had dined with the Queen of England two or three times, so that this was not a new thing for him. Indeed, Booker Washington's manner was easier than that of almost any other man I saw meet the Prince in this country. The Prince afterwards referred to President Roosevelt's action in regard to Booker Washington, and applauded it very highly.

The Ride on a Locomotive

Another thing the Prince expressed early a desire for was a ride on a locomotive. He likes the excitement of running torpedo-boats, and the speed of an engine ashore attracted him in the same way. He asked several times if he was to be allowed to go on an engine. The committee doubted whether it was wise to let him take the risk, especially with the country flooded and accidents happening everywhere, but the Prince laughed at this view, and the German ambassador consented; so the Pennsylvania Railroad arranged to have him ride on a new 120-ton engine, from Summit 100 miles toward Pittsburg. Mr. Boyd, who represented the company, rode with him. Unfortunately the trip was interrupted by a wreck, causing a delay of two hours; but the Prince used the time to talk to the engine man, examine the locomotive, and chat with the crowd. He never was more democratic and happy and affable. When the track was cleared, he had his ride, and a fast one, so that he returned to the car dirty and laughing, to jump into a bath and hustle into his uniform for dinner.

What the Prince came here for

Now the purpose of Prince Henry's visit was very simple—it was, like the visit itself, friendly. He said so himself, repeating it time and again in his public speeches; and what he said publicly was exactly what he said privately. Being with him all the time, I enjoyed his confidence, and he talked about this point frequently. Always he said that

he had come to extend across the ocean the hand of friendship; there was nothing more in it—nothing more subtle or complex. Of course he and his suite were here to see things, and, each an expert in his profession, they saw much and they saw it keenly, with understanding and a willingness to learn. "Keep your eyes and ears open and your mouth shut," Prince Henry said his brother's instructions were. I believe this was all there was to it, this and the personal interest of the Prince in our people, which was personal, mind you, and sincere; and in ships, machinery, industries, and business. Why shouldn't a prince have personal tastes and private human interests? Surely Prince Henry has these traits. Indeed, I think some of the disappointments of his visit grew out of them.

Fondness for Machinery and Industries

Fond of machinery, he wanted to see more of our great factories. There was no time for that. The power-house of the Niagara Power Company, which turns 250,000 horse-power of the falls into motive power and electric light for Buffalo and other places, fascinated him, and he had a good look over that. That was but one, however, and he had heard of so many others he would have liked to see. This was the man. Both the man and the prince were interested in the great industrial development of the country.

When we struck the oil fields of Ohio he wanted the train stopped to investigate the oil wells. That is a burning question in Germany, because they have no petroleum, and it was a matter of great interest to him. Of course it was impossible to stop. Then he wanted to see how the people lived. At Harvard he wanted to go into the students' rooms and see how they were put up, but the time was too crowded. He wanted to go into the stock-yards at Chicago and see how cattle were slaughtered, the pork packed, etc., but that was impossible because the proprietors, with so many Poles in their employ, would not guarantee his safety, and, though the Prince was willing himself to take the risk, the German ambassador objected, and I think very properly, because some crank might have thrown something at him. After all, his safety was the main thing, and we all know that a prince has to make many sacrifices of personal liberty: that's one of the ways by which the privileges of men are balanced in this world.

Pumping the Captains of Industry

The luncheon given by the captains of industry was a chance for him. There he was allowed not only to meet the kind of men that interested him, but to pump them to his heart's content. And he did pump them. One after another he had such men as J. Pierpont Morgan, Charles M. Schwab, and others presented, and they gave up to him all he cared to ask for in the way of information. That was indeed an occasion which he enjoyed to the full.

Bored by Public Speeches

At most dinners he had no conversation, only speeches, and this everlasting speech-making of ours bored him as it did the rest of us. He said so.

"What an extraordinary way of entertaining one's guest," he said once, "to sit him down and make speeches at him. There is no chance for conversation. I find myself seated between two charming gentlemen, but am unable to get any more than 'yes' and 'no' out of them until after they have made speeches. Then they turn out to be entertaining, witty, full of knowledge and character, and I realize that before that they couldn't talk to me because they were conning their speeches."

A Royal Command to Shoot a Man

Once, at Boston, a particularly long-winded, dry, and orderly speaker was droning on, to the death of the whole company. It was a regular thirdly-fourthly-fifthly-in conclusion-and-one-word-more-oration, and everybody was in perfect sympathy against the man. The Prince caught Chief Wilkie's eye, and with a twinkle in his own, he put his hand down inside his coat. He knew that Wilkie carried a gun there, and it was a suggestion to draw and shoot. If Wilkie had been up on etiquette, and had taken the royal wish for a command, there would have been some mighty democratic approval of justifiable homicide.

At Niagara Falls, where the Prince was eager to see that wonderful tumble of the waters, after he had seen enough of it to move his musical soul and make him feel the finest emotion a man can have, they got him out on the middle of the bridge, with the roar of Niagara in his ears, and made him listen to speeches. Oh, he saw some of the Falls,

the Gorge, and the Rapids, but he would have liked to see more.

Not all the speeches were bad, however, and not all the dinners were speeches. Mayor Low's little address, presenting the freedom of the city of New York, was a gem of which the Prince said that "every phrase was polished and brilliant." And there were other such exceptions. Then the Prince, who is something of a story-teller, was highly ertertained by the stories of such men as Judge Howland, who told some of his best and newest things, which the Prince has taken home with him along with his happiest loot from this country.

Milwaukee's Newest Bid for Fame

Easy as it was for the Prince to meet men and women *en masse*, it was hard to have quiet talks with individuals. He felt disappointed, too, that he had few new acquaintances among American women—two or three in Boston; four or five in New York. They were about all. He was especially pleased with Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt; he had heard her story, and liked the way she was helping her husband to be something else than a millionaire.

Among the crowds, the women of Milwaukee struck him as most beautiful. They did me, too. I never remember hearing that Milwaukee was famous for lovely women, and maybe the beauty we saw there that day was due to the fresh breeze that happened to be blowing off the lake. Anyhow, as we drove along, I was fully occupied with the faces on my side of the carriage, yet Prince Henry kept calling my attention to those on his side. At last I warned him that each had enough to do to watch his own share, and that if we both tried to see all there were on both sides of the road, we should soon be cross-eyed. After that we left each other alone, and yet saw an amazing number of beautiful faces.

The Winning of the West

It was a disappointment to him that he could not go farther West. He wished to see some of our Indians. Once when a band of them was about to play, somebody had to make a speech, and the Prince saw little of the first people in America. He said that he would like to come over again, the next time in a private capacity, and if he did, he was going to make Milwaukee his headquarters, he said, striking out from there into the West, especially the great Northwest, which attracts him strongly. I think he will come again, and when I get back from China I am going to invite him to go out on a good big hunt with me. I know he will like that, and it will give him a chance to see what he has not been able to see this time.

His Knowledge of Railway Affairs

Still he got a good deal by way of first impressions. His own little dinners in his car on the train were put to good use. He, the German ambassador, the German adjutant on duty for the day, and I were in that car, and we always dined together, but the Prince said at the outset that he wanted to have a party of eight at table each day. This party was made up by inviting an American officer, a German officer, the official representative of the railroad we happened to be traveling on, and some other one of the attendants. The conversations that resulted were highly entertaining and, usually, informing. The railroad men invariably were made to give up information; the Prince asked them all sorts of questions, and he showed a knowledge of railroad matters, about which I should not have supposed him to know anything.

Samples of the Royal Slang and Humor

I see that some comment has been made upon the Prince's English—that he knew it so well that he could indulge in the correct use of slang. I will go further than that; he knew his English so well that he was able to stand up for the pedigree of some of the language of the street. For instance, one day he said "hustle"—"if we are to get through we'll have to hustle," or something to that effect. A remark was made to him on his slang, and he said, "No; 'hustle' is not slang. It is a good old English word, and I learned it when I was studying in England." Still, he did say such things as "cinch"—"that's a cinch,"—and when some one asked him to make a speech in Boston, he said "Not on your life." Speech-making, however, especially in Boston, was a fit subject for extraordinary expression.

The Prince's humor struck me as being American. He certainly appreciated what we mean by that phrase. I didn't think it quite right for the boys on the street to call out "Hello, Henry," or "Where is Henry?"

But the Prince did not seem to mind. He answered in kind. "Hello," he would answer, or "Here I am," "I am Henry," or, with his finger pointing to his breast, "Here is Prince Henry." If they said "Hello, Prince, how are you?" he would say, "All right; how are you?"

His Knowledge of American History

On Lookout Mountain, the Prince showed that he had studied American history well enough to know all about that battle. So did General von Plessen show a most intimate study of our war history. He asked General Boynton amazingly intimate questions about where detailed movements were executed. And let me say here that it was a pleasure to hear the description General Boynton gave of that action—it was vivid, clear, simple, and most effectively expressed. I seemed to see the battle going on again.

The Prince's Jest on Chicago

The way the Prince and his keen-eyed staff made observations was sometimes astonishing. They would hit off in a word the characteristics of crowds, revealing a sense of the differences among our cities. Chicago had eight picked policemen to guard the Prince. Each of these men was six feet four or five inches tall, and they were got up in evening dress and silk hats. The Prince noticed them that evening with silent appreciation, but when they turned up the next morning in the same costume, he asked, "Could this happen anywhere except in Chicago?" When we were at the University Club, in New York, Admiral von Tirpitz came to me quite excited. "Why, you have developed a new type of men in this country," he exclaimed. "I do not see German faces here, or English, or Spanish, or French faces. You have developed a new type of men. Your university men are a new class entirely." It was this keen-minded German admiral who gave me a new idea of economy. He and I naturally had many professional talks together, and one of the topics was the submarine boat. The Germans are doing nothing at all in this line, nothing but watching and waiting, and I asked why. "We can't afford it," he answered. "We can afford the money, but not the brains. We think we can utilize our mental energy to better advantage in developing fighting ships for the supremacy of the sea." They certainly are doing good work on the surface of the water. That appeared in our talks. And, by the way, one thing the Prince and his admiral expressed surprise at was our abandonment of the torpedo on our battleships. They regard the torpedo as a very deadly weapon, but they were so interested in our reasoning about it that they returned to the discussion again and again.

Hand Extended Across the Sea Grasped

Prince Henry gave a formal luncheon on board the "Deutchland" before sailing for home. All those who had accompanied him on his trip were present and enjoyed the hour of familiar conversation where true feeling found its way to the surface. Each one was toasted by his Royal Highness, and then in a few heartfelt words he expressed his warm personal thanks for the service we had done him. There was real sentiment in what he said, and each of us felt it.

As representative of the navy I said a few words, and they indicate, and were meant to indicate, my views as to the object and result of the Prince's visit. I said:

"Prince Henry, and brother officers of the German service, representing the navy of the United States, I say to you that we are glad you came, we are sorry you are going, and we hope you will come again. It gives me pleasure to grasp the friendly hand so courteously extended to us across the North Atlantic."

The grasp that I received across that breakfast table convinced me that there was strength of muscle as well as friendship behind it. In these few words I indicate just what I think of Prince Henry's visit. It was purely and simply a visit of friendship to cement the friendly relations existing between two great nations. Those who were doing the cementing on both sides had their eyes and ears open, and, as a rule, their mouths shut. After a close personal relation with his Royal Highness during his entire visit, and many most intimate and confidential conversations, I feel justified in saying that I have given above the sole object of his visit. I may say, further, that he was gratified, and satisfied, with the results. For myself, I may say I am, as I have always been, proud of my countrymen, in this case for the hearty and courteous greeting they gave our country's guest.

A MATTER OF PROVIDENCE

BY ELLSWORTH KELLEY

IT was a royal day in the royal month of October. The fodder was in the shock. The golden pumpkins still lay ungathered between the rows of corn-stubs. Lemon-colored straw-ricks were bleaching into softer tones in the autumn sun. Ripe apples weighed down the boughs in the orchard across the road—dark red winesaps, freckled rambos, great yellow bell-flowers. The sugar orchard across the clearing was a blaze of oriental yellows, purples, and scarlets.

The two old men were sitting on the top rail of the old "worm" fence along the roadside. Back of them stretched a belt of hickory timber that was to them a present source of discontent. They had driven out to Beecham's woods, bringing with them their daughters, Lizy Jane and Nancy Ann, to spend the day in gathering nuts. The morning's search had been disappointing, and the two old men had climbed to the top rail to rest, while the women sat in the shade near the spring wagon, and discussed things which are of moment to housewives.

Uncle Billy's disappointment gradually dissipated under the soothing influence of fair landscape and peaceful atmosphere.

"'I would not live alway; I ask not to stay,'" softly quoted Uncle Billy. "Still, Joe, ef there ever was a time I felt I would like to live straight ahead forever, it's when everything looks like that!" and he waved his cane toward the orchard, the straw-ricks, and the flaming sugar trees across the clearing.

Uncle Joe nodded assent. He, too, loved the autumn time, but was less demonstrative than Uncle Billy. With great deliberation he cut off a chew of tobacco and passed knife and plug to Uncle Billy. That worthy cut off a generous chew and stowed it comfortably in his left cheek.

"Be keerful, Billy. That stuff swells!" cautioned Uncle Joe.

Uncle Billy's face creased into a wrinkled old smile.

"You've said that same identical thing ev'ry time I've borried a chaw of you fer the last sixty year, and it ain't never swelled yit!—leastways, never but once. *You* remember all about that time, Joe!"

"'Pears like I do, but I clean forgit all the facts now. How was it, Billy?"

Uncle Billy spat and ruminated. "'Twan't much to tell," he at length responded. "It was my first chaw, and—I swallered it!"

"Bless my life! Made you might' sick?"

"Like to a died! I'd been havin' chills for more'n a year, but that chaw broke 'em up! Never had the ager sence."

They were silent for many moments. Uncle Billy jabbed with his cane at a knot on a rail. Uncle Joe whittled on a sliver. Over in the shade the horses stamped and rattled their harness noisily to rid themselves of persistent flies. The old men listened a while to the sounds of the woods—to the querulous calling of the jays, the far-off shoutings of boys along a creek, the mingled jangle of cow-bell and tinkle of sheep-bell, and to the voices of their daughters.

"Joe, I never noticed afore how much Lizy Jane's voice soun's like her ma's used to. Fer half a minut' I almost thought it *was* her, and you and her and me and Mary all young ag'in."

There was a plaintive tenderness in Uncle Joe's voice as he answered:

"I'm gittin' old, William, and at times I notice I'm a leetle mite fergitful. But my young days seem mighty near to me yit. And when I think of when we was all young together I feel like I'd trade off my chances in Eternal Glory to live them days over ag'in—to live 'em over with *her!*"

Uncle Billy rested his hand lightly on Uncle Joe's knee.

"She was as perfect a woman as the Lord ever made," continued Uncle Joe, "and as good. The best in sickness and most helpin' to them as needed help. And cook! No livin' woman cud beat her makin' pot-pie, not even Lizy Jane."

"My first wife was a mighty good cook," interposed Uncle Billy.

"She was so! But I was always perticular fond of pot-pie, and Lizy Jane's ma was

nigh perfect at makin' one. And she was always purty busy when she was alive, and she wasn't much of a hand to gad 'round nohow. But shore's October come, jest that shore she'd take a notion in her head that we had to make a day of it in the timber.

"We'd git up airly and she'd fry a chicken er two and fix a dishpanful of somethin' good to eat, and then I'd have to hook up a team and away to the woods we'd go. And we'd pick hazelnuts and warnuts and hick'ry-nuts. And we'd eat our dinner by the crick, and she'd be as lively and full of fun as a girl. Blame it, William, I can't nowise talk about it."

"The Lord gives and the Lord takes away," began Uncle Billy. "It was one of them dispensations of an all-wise Providence —her removal."

Uncle Joe sat a moment doubtfully. Then he replied: "She caught her death nursin' our little boy through his last sickness. It was spotted fever, and she took it and died. I don't b'lieve Providence takes any int'rest in us mortals. Leastways, not in that way."

This was assailing a doctrine peculiarly precious to Uncle Billy. So, to Uncle Joe's skepticism, he responded in trembling, indignant voice:

"W-y, J-o-seph Gr-a'-am! you're a gettin' wickeder ev'ry day you live! A man at your age—with growed-up gran'childern and spells of rheumatiz bad as you hev sometimes —and talkin' like that!" Uncle Billy paused in impotent, righteous wrath.

"What's the use in gittin' riled up, Billy? You know I wasn't sayin' so to rile you. I said so 'cause I *think* that way."

"But you *ortn't* to think that way! It soun's like you was goin' to the bad—right at the end of your days, too!"

"Billy, I tell you it's jest the way you *look* at it. As fer as bein' wicked, ef you know of anything right ra-el, downright mean I've done fer—fer the last ten years, say—w'y, don't be afeard o' hurtin' my feelin's, but speak right up."

Uncle Billy fidgeted a little. Uncle Joe was known far and wide as a good man. Many a sack of flour, bushel of potatoes, or side of bacon which found its way to the needy was paid for with Uncle Joe's money, and though he openly flouted at the spending of money on the heathen, secretly he was a heavy contributor to the cause.

"It ain't that, Joe. You're one of them that thinks good works is what counts. You ain't got no realizin' sense of havin' been borned in a state of sin an' misery."

"Course I hain't, 'cause I don't *b'lieve* that way," cheerfully retorted Uncle Joe.

"And this here doctrine of Providence! You don't b'lieve in *it!*"

"Well, not adzacly. I don't b'lieve the Lord keeps track of our down-settin's and uprisin's. I don't b'lieve, when He sees a man goin' to destruction, He reaches out and grabs him back. I don't nowise believe *that.*"

"But Providence *does* do that very thing, Joe. W'y, I know a story——"

But Uncle Joe broke in: "Say, Billy, what'd you think about the case of M's' Wilkins? You ricollect *her?*"

"Shorely, shorely. She was a faithful member fer nigh on thirty year. She had a wonderful clear and refreshin' experience; and shout—it did my old soul good jest to hear her the night her man comes to the mourner's bench. She died a shoutin' praises to the Lord. Brother Bemis preached her funeral, and he said it was one of them dispensations of Providence past all findin' out."

"Adzacly," said Uncle Joe. "She waded a mile through the wet snow to meetin' and took her death o' cold. Providence didn't hev nothin' to do with it. It was her own keerlessness."

Further discussion was shut off by the clang of a distant dinner-bell, and the voice of Lizy Jane calling, "Pap, ain't it 'most dinner time?" and then the two old men climbed down from the fence and made their way leisurely to the spring wagon.

"Pap, if you'll go to the crick after some water, and Uncle Billy'll make a fire, I'll make you both a good cup of coffee."

Uncle Joe took a bucket and started toward the creek. Uncle Billy busied himself with the fire, which he soon had blazing.

The women selected a grassy plot in the shade and spread the dinner. Then they waited for the return of Uncle Joe. He was gone so long that Lizy Jane grew uneasy; but at last he was observed coming across the clearing with the bucket of water.

"What on earth kept you so long, Papa? I was just goin' to hunt you up."

"I ain't as young as I used to be, Lizy Jane, and I s'pose I poked along more'n common. Didn't like the looks o' the crick water, so I went on up to Beecham's. Stopped to chat a bit with old man Beecham, too." There was a twinkle in his eye as he said it.

The coffee was soon boiling, and then they all sat down to dinner. After a moment's silence Nancy Ann looked at her father and nodded. Uncle Billy lifted one hand, bowed

reverently, and, in a quavering voice, said grace.

With keen relish they fell to eating. The old men ate with almost boyish zest, and rallied each other about the way the victuals disappeared. The daughters smiled over their sallies, and Nancy Ann said: "I'd give a dollar, Lizy Jane, to have seen them two when they was forty years younger. They was a purty lively outfit, I bet!" Then, to the two old men: "Us women got the dinner, and now you two men has to wash the dishes!"

When the horses had been watered at the creek and had been fed ten ears of corn apiece, Lizy Jane asked, "Well, Papa, what we goin' to do now? Set 'round and act like we was at a picnic?" Then it was Uncle Joe smote his thigh and exclaimed: "I vum! I mighty near forgot to tell you somethin'. There's a place over yander in Beecham's back pastur' where there's hick'ry-nuts on the ground thick as the hair on a dog's back! Big, nice shell barks, too."

"Beecham don't 'low no pickin' in his back pastur'," objected Uncle Billy.

"Yes he does, too! Leastways, he said we might. He said he'd kep' the boys chased out, and from the looks o' the ground I guess he has. Lizy Jane, you and Nancy Ann bring the sacks. Billy, help carry the buckets, will you?"

Uncle Joe piloted the party to the nutting ground. There were nuts in plenty, even as he had said, and with many exclamations of pleased surprise they fell to gathering them up.

At last the nuts were all gathered—almost three bushels of them. Then Uncle Billy found some vines of wild fox grapes along the creek bank. He and Uncle Joe pulled and tugged and tore at the tangled vines, and at last they had their buckets filled with grapes—ripe, black-juiced, musky-odored—which the women declared made the finest of all fine grape jelly. And then they drove home in the calm of the twilight hour, through peaceful lanes where the blue-grass still was green beneath the hedgerows, and where clusters of belated elderberries, ripe unto repletion, bowed their heavy heads in the wayside angles of the zigzag fence.

"It was a heavenly perfect day," said Uncle Billy with a sigh of satisfaction, as he and Uncle Joe paused for a final word at the barn-lot gate. "And it looks to me, Joe, when I consider how your feet was led to the only identical spot in the woods where there was any nuts; w'y, Joseph, it looks to me like a plain case of the hand of Providence. What on airth are you laughin' at, Joe? I don't see anything to laugh at!"

"Mebby you don't *now*, but mebby you will when I tell you somethin'. It's like this: When I went up to Beecham's after water and told him we was after nuts and not findin' any, he says, 'Of course not, 'cause I've had them all picked up myself. I've got five bar'ls over thar in the smoke-house and ev'ry bar'l has got three bushel in it!'

"I studied a minut', and then I wanted to know what he'd take fer a bar'l. 'A hull bar'l?' he said, and I said, 'Yes; a hull bar'l.' He studied some, and figgered a little with a nail on his boot-leg, and then he 'lowed he'd sell me a hull bar'l for three dollars.

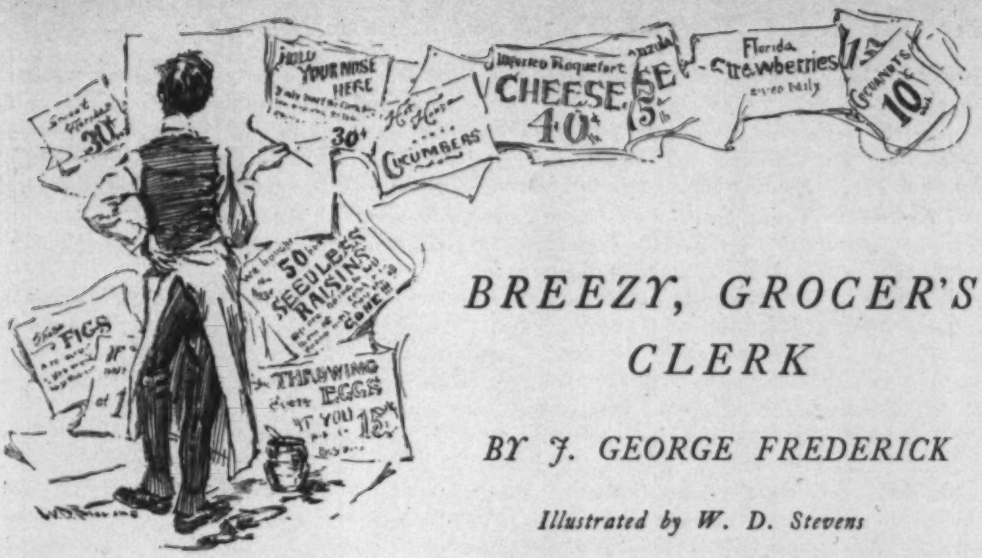
"'Done!' I said; 'but you'll hev to he'p me do one thing.' And when I told him what, he jest laughed and laughed. So we rolled that bar'l o' nuts down under them hick'ry trees, and we jest sowed them nuts by the bucketful. 'I jinks, Uncle Joe,' he said when we got done, 'I've sowed wheat 'n' oats, and I've sowed flax and turnip-seed; but this is the fu'st time in all my born days that I ever he'ped put in a crop o' hick'ry-nuts!' Talk o' the hand o' Providence! Haw-haw-haw! Oh, Billy, Billy!"

Uncle Billy heard the dénouement of the story with the keenest mortification; and then there came to him an inspiration, startling, brilliant, convincing.

He had taken off his hat as he listened, and the light from the hunter's moon kissed the bald spot on his head into a halo as he responded, in tones of simple faith:

"Even so, Joseph; even so! Believin' all you say, which I nowise misdoubt, ef you hadn't been led to go to Beecham's instid o' the crick, you wouldn't a seen them nuts; and ef you hadn't a seen 'em you wouldn't a bought 'em; and ef you hadn't a bought 'em we wouldn't a had any. It was the Lord that led your footsteps, Joe. It's as remarkable a case of Providence as I ever see!"

Uncle Joe chewed hard at the ends of his billy-goat beard for a moment. Then, as he caught the wrapt expression of triumphant faith on the other old man's face, he cast aside the argument he was about to offer in rebuttal, and gently answered, "I vum, Billy! It *does* look like you had a leetle the best end of the argyment, after all!"



BREEZY, GROCER'S CLERK

BY J. GEORGE FREDERICK

Illustrated by W. D. Stevens

WHEN the prosperous though unprogressive firm of Casper W. Leslie & Co., grocers, hired him they thought they had secured an ordinary clerk, and gave themselves no further concern. They already had a force of about a dozen clerks, besides half a dozen delivery teams. They had hired clerks for twenty years, and it was to them a troublesome and vexatious proceeding. They frowned at first at his slight frame, but when he put a prostrate sugar barrel on end with easy unconcern, all objections were immediately withdrawn.

His surname was the leveling one of Smith, and his Christian name—highly Christian—Hezekiah. His mother called him "Zeke" and his companions, "Breezy."

Breezy entered upon his work whistling in supreme content. He was at the bottom of the commercial hill, and was preparing to run up to the top. He had no star-high ambitions to make him dream, no love affairs to make him forgetful, and no vices to keep him from doing his best. There wasn't a lazy tendon in his body. He was not tall. If he had been, he would have been lazy. He was short, thin, black-eyed, nervous, and muscular. Before his ponderous companions got an idea through their heads, Breezy was half-way done with the action. A few thought he was a genius; but they were mistaken. Breezy was innocent of the smallest spark. He just had a heavy capital of nervous energy that made him work while others were content to lounge.

They put him behind the fruit counter. His first act was to clean it up and "fix things" generally. "Such a rum way of doing business," he muttered, quite like an experienced grocer, scowling at the hidden waste and slipshod displays of his predecessor. When he was through with the counter there was absolutely no fault to find with it. But he was not satisfied. He went into the cellar and started to saw and nail some boxes to make receptacles for various things back of his counter.

"What are you doing here?" said the pompous and obese superintendent, finding him at work.

"Oh," said Breezy carelessly, "I'm just getting some boxes in shape to put dirt and tools in at my counter."

"We have got a carpenter to do that," said the superintendent, with displeasure; "get up where you belong and 'tend to your customers."

Breezy went up, and finished the boxes later while the superintendent was absent. He cleaned the fruit on his stand four times a day. "It gets so blamed mussed up," he said briskly to a fellow clerk who looked askance at the action.

"The other clerk didn't," replied his companion suggestively.

"Didn't he?" said Breezy coolly.

Of course the clerks laughed at him. His tie was awry and of objectionable hue, and his trousers lacked the proper cut and crease.

The fruit trade was slow, and Breezy was highly impatient. The superintendent compelled him to stay behind his counter, and he had to gaze impatiently over the bustling crowd of the store, which seemed to stop at every other counter but his. Twice, when the superintendent was not about, he made a personal canvass among the shoppers and secured a number of sales. The third time he was discovered and peremptorily ordered back.

"He made a personal canvass among the shoppers"

After closing time, Breezy was absent-minded and restless. The noise of the overhead cash system; the aroma of freshly roasted coffee, of bacon, and of cheese; the click of the weighing scales; the scraping of the busy scoops; the shrill staccato of the register bells and opening drawers; the rustle of the wrapping paper; the shuffle of hurrying feet; the rumble of the drays on the cobbles outside; the incessant hum of voices, and the ever-changing panorama of shoppers — all these had become to Breezy the breath of life, and he sighed for them longingly ere the evenings were over. He had a printing press, and he set type as a means of diversion — all matter concerning the grocery store.

"He promptly bought the best seat in the theater"

He set up a card and embodied in it an idea that he had conceived. He printed 500 of them — all the cardboard he had. They were invitations to the public to have any and all sorts of fruit delivered at their homes at any time by telephone orders. He laid one on Mr. Leslie's desk the next morning.

"Thompson," Breezy heard Leslie call shortly afterwards to the superintendent, "this is a good idea. How many did you have printed?"

Thompson grew red. "I didn't have any printed," he replied in surprise. Leslie frowned, and called his partner, who also professed ignorance. Breezy watched them from behind the register, and then ventured forward.

"I printed them on my own press. Here are 500 more."

Leslie looked again at the card, and then

raised his eyebrows at Thompson, who nodded in return, seemingly signifying that this was the clerk mentioned in some previous conversation.

"You may hand in your bill for them to the bookkeeper," said Leslie evenly; "and, Thompson, you may have them properly distributed."

He was paid for his cards, and there was also an extra dollar in his weekly pay envelope that Saturday. He promptly bought the best seat in the theater.

They found him the next week in the telephone booth, calling up successively from a list of over 100 residences. "Is this Mrs. Jones?" he would ask. "Pardon me, Mrs. Jones; this is Leslie's. We would like to sell you some groceries." And then he would enter into a conversation for an order. The other people on the line were indignant, and the exchange told him that he was not the only lung on the line. But in less than an hour Breezy had hurry orders aggregating twenty dollars, and Leslie himself closed Thompson's mouth of wrath at neglected customers by a word of commendation.

The firm's telephone trade had never been worked up, and Breezy printed announcements inviting customers to use the 'phone to send their orders. A 'phone was placed behind the fruit counter, and Breezy took the orders. He did more. "You're going to bake, aren't you?" he asked of the housewives when they ordered flour, lard, etc. "Isn't your baking-powder all gone? Don't you need some new pans? We've got a splendid new pan here. Patented. Only eight cents, too." And so on.

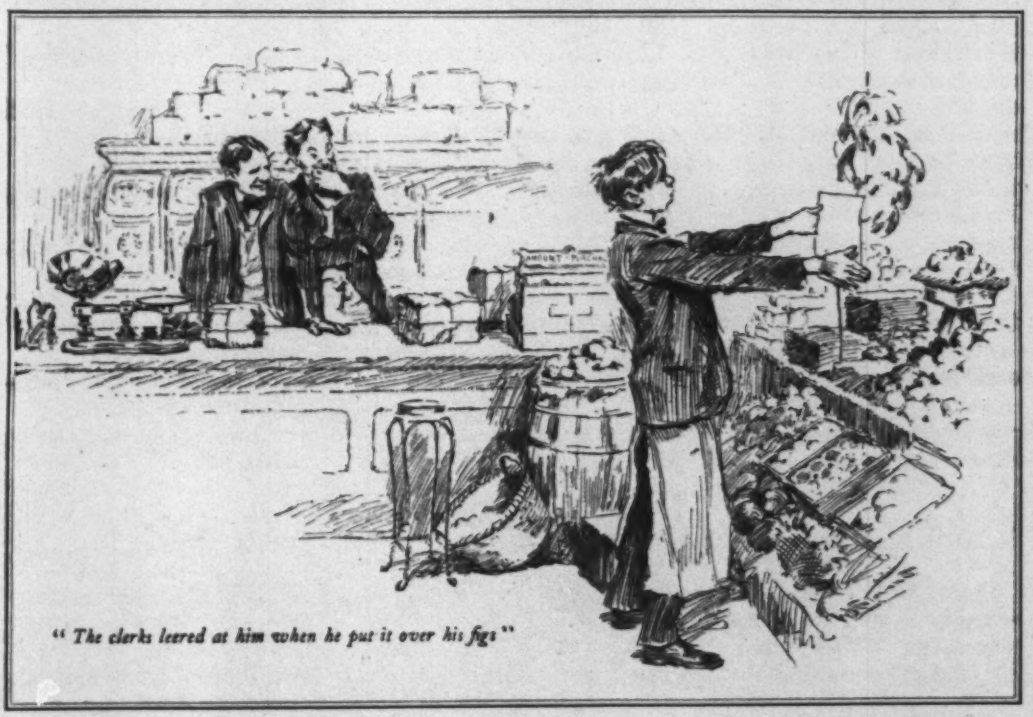
"Here, Mr. Thompson," he called to the superintendent as he passed one day; "who makes these sign cards?"

"Tommy, the shipping clerk," replied Thompson shortly.

"I have just thought," said Breezy reflectively, "that I might make a nicer one for this counter. May I try one?"

"Yes; but don't neglect your counter."

Breezy had just received a large quantity of splendid figs that morning, which were selling at a really attractive price. But the firm had not even given him price cards to put on them, and had not mentioned them in the newspaper ads. "How in blazes do they expect to sell these?" he grumbled. "Nobody knows anything about them."



"The clerks leered at him when he put it over his figs"

When, therefore, he had surprised the busy shipping clerk by asking for the card-marking tools, and had made a few simple price cards for other goods, it occurred to him that he might as well make a fig sign. It was prettily lettered, and it read: "These figs are good, clean figs, and you won't be

able to buy them very many days." The clerks leered at him when he put it over his figs, rearranging the boxes artistically on the counter. Thompson didn't happen around any more that day, but in the evening Breezy sought him out. The figs were all gone.

"H'm," said the superintendent, "you must have had an extra run on figs today."

Over the new supply that he received the next morning, the clerks read from another card: "More good, clean figs at this price. They'll only last through the day, though." It seemed as if everybody that came into the store that day bought figs. Thompson came to the fruit counter out of curiosity, attracted by the crowd there, which Breezy was waiting upon with a satisfied and dexterous alacrity. He elevated his eyebrows at the sign.

"Who made that sign?" he asked, when the crowd cleared off.

"Me," said Breezy, in a bustle at the cash register.

"H'm, h'm," said the superintendent, strolling off.

"Thompson stood before it for full two minutes"

The next day it was raisins at a bargain, and Breezy's sign said: "We bought fifty boxes of these seedless raisins, and we are going to sell them at —— cents a pound until they are all gone."

"How many boxes of those seedless raisins went out today?" asked Thompson that evening, looking sourly at the sign. "I'm afraid they won't go very well."

"Twenty-five," answered Breezy.

"What!" said Thompson, staring over his spectacles.

"Twenty-five," repeated Breezy.

"H'm, *h'm*," said the superintendent, walking rapidly off.

The other twenty-five went the next day.

"Could have sold more," said Breezy.

"H'm," said Thompson slowly; and after a minute: "Those signs are neatly lettered."

Breezy was vigorously cleaning up.

"You may take off the dull hours," con-

"To watch customers stare and break out into laughter"

tinued Thompson cautiously, "and make the signs for the whole store. We'll get an assistant at your counter." Breezy was kicking some boxes under his counter.

"D'ye hear?" said Thompson.

"Yes, sir," said Breezy.

For the next six weeks the customers at Leslie's enjoyed daily treats from the signs. There were no less than fifty to be made on busy days. The language was simple; it told the truth about the goods, and it never disappointed, and quite often there was a bit of humor in it. The obese superintendent frowned at Breezy's efforts and looked as if he half regretted his venture.

"The old guy," mused Breezy one day, as he saw Thompson deliberately tear one of them up. It was an egg sign, and read: "If you wait until to-morrow to buy these eggs at fifteen cents the dozen, they may not be as good as they are to-day!" Promptly Breezy had another one up which read: "It's throwing these eggs at you to sell them for fifteen cents the dozen. They're not bad, though."

Thompson stood before it for full two minutes before he decided to let it pass, and then walked away, murmuring, "H'm, h'm."

But Breezy ran to extremes, and one day, when Leslie paused before a cheese sign and read, "Hold your nose here. It only takes the clerk two minutes by the clock to wrap up half a pound at thirty cents," he decided that he would draw the limit, and he told Breezy to take it down, which Breezy did with a rather crestfallen air. He had been particularly proud of this effort, and had stood behind his register a dozen different times during the day, to watch customers stare and break out into laughter. A week later they made him take another one down, and Mr. Leslie called him aside.

"Don't try to be so funny on your cards," he frowned. "You make nice cards when you stick to fact, but when you get humorous you are as loud as a barrel of mackerel."

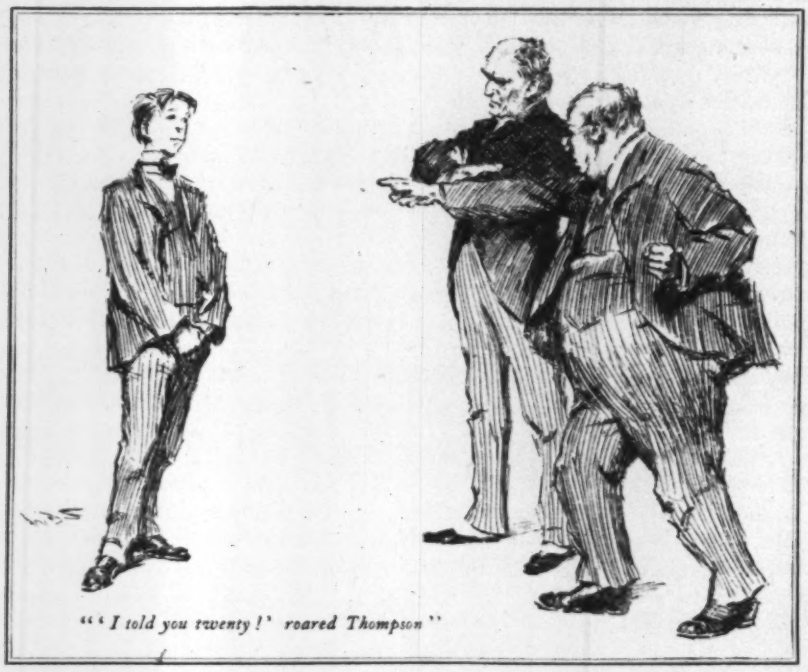
Breezy grunted ungracious acquiescence, while the corners of the grocer's mouth twitched at the recollection of some of the cards. But they continued to be as flagrant as ever. Thompson complained to Leslie about it, and the proprietor sat for a few moments in deep thought.

"That boy's got too much vitality," he said, "and we'll have to give him another outlet for it. Making cards and answering the telephone isn't enough for him to do. I believe that I will put Morris at the telephone, and let Smith do our important outside business down town." The change was accordingly made, and Breezy became a sort of confidential clerk, doing most of the firm's business with the banks and the down-town offices. Characteristically, he allowed no opportunity to escape to learn the firm's manner of doing business, and its needs. He was not chary with suggestions either, and was told by the firm more than once that his advice had not been asked, and that it was therefore not very valuable. This logic Breezy utterly failed to comprehend.

His old friends smiled as he dashed by them daily on his bicycle, his hat crushed into his head and his face almost on the handle bars.

The firm sent him to the newspaper offices to take advertising copy. The advertisements which he carried he criticised freely on the road down town. Most of his criticisms were of a decidedly adverse nature,

"The tubs were all delivered in the afternoon"



"'I told you twenty!' roared Thompson"

and his opinion of the man who wrote them, the head of the firm, grew more and more contemptuous. He had learned some lessons in advertising by his card making.

One morning they sent him to a down-town firm of producers with an order for twenty tubs of butter. With the order they gave him copy to take to all the morning papers, making commonplace and altogether unattractive mention—thought Breezy—of a proposed special sale of these twenty tubs of butter.

"That's the weakest thing yet," he soliloquized, as he sped down the empty avenue. "Butter'll go up three cents a pound one of these days."

As he stood in the office of the company, he heard a man say something confidentially to the produce man and a customer that made him wink hard. It was that butter would go up in a few days. The customer did not seem to take it very seriously, but Breezy construed it into a mighty tip.

"Just what I thought," he said to himself. "That slow firm buying only twenty tubs!" It occurred to him that he might telephone to the firm and give them the tip; but he immediately rejected the idea.

"They'd only laugh and tell me that I wasn't running their business."

Then was born a great idea. An instant later he was decided. The producer whistled when Breezy handed him an order for a hundred tubs.

"It'll take all we have," he said.

Breezy sat down at a desk and wrote something rapidly. The foreman at the newspaper composing rooms looked at him in surprise as he gave directions about border and type, technicalities which he had learned as editor of the school paper.

The tubs were all delivered in the afternoon. Thompson came out in the wareroom and looked at the first batch of twenty. "*I* wouldn't have ordered twenty!" he said, shaking his head. "I told Jim they wouldn't go." He wasn't in when the rest came. "Are they turning the store into a butter house?" said the shipping clerk, grumbling, as he helped the men bring them in.

"Great heavens!" ejaculated Thompson the next morning when he came into the wareroom. "Where does all this butter come from?"

The shipping clerk looked unintelligent, and made no answer. Thompson brought in the head of the firm, Mr. Leslie. He, in turn, stared dumbly at the tiers of tubs.

"What the ——!" he began excitedly. "I told you to order twenty, didn't I?"

"You advised me not to buy *more*," said Thompson stiffly, "and I didn't."

"Can't you count?" exclaimed Leslie wrathfully, pointing to the tubs. "There's a hundred there, if there's one!"

When Breezy was finally called in, he faced both men easily.

"How many tubs of butter did you order?" asked Leslie.

"One hundred."

"I told you twenty!" roared Thompson.

Leslie did not answer, but made for the telephone. The produce people firmly refused to take back the tubs. "We've just refilled our refrigerators, and can't accommodate any more," they said. But they added something more in a telephone whisper.

"Mr. Leslie," said Breezy, when the proprietor rang off, without any visible allayment of his wrath, "I was ordered to get only twenty, but I made it a hundred, and——"

"You did, did you?" burst out Leslie, glaring at Breezy with unutterable derision. "You'll be advertising yourself as proprietor of this store shortly, won't you?"

"But, Mr. Leslie," protested Breezy, "butter's going up in a few days!"

"Great guns!" roared Leslie, "are—are you running this firm, you—you impudent young fool? You young barrel of gall! I've a notion to break your —— head!"

Breezy flushed angrily.

"Go out and draw your salary, and never set foot here again!"

Breezy turned on his heel and walked out, without looking at the clerks who had assembled at the wareroom door, attracted by the loud voices.

"Fools! fools!" he muttered between his teeth, as he drove his bicycle along the street.

When he looked at copies of all the morning papers, in which appeared the advertisements he had prepared the day before, in lieu of the originals, he smiled in genuine artistic gratification.

"If that don't sell butter," he chuckled, "nothing ever will." The advertisement predicted that butter would go up very soon, and that Leslie & Co. had bought, in anticipation of this, 100 tubs, which they would sell at one cent below the market price.

"There will be a still awfuller row in that shanty when they see these. They might arrest me." But the spirit of Breezy rose hopefully to the possibility. "If they only wait till to-night."

He learnt afterwards that the store was crowded with butter buyers from early morning until late in the afternoon, and that his advertisements had precipitated the coming rise in price, and an advance of one cent was already asked that same day.

It was during the afternoon of the next day that Breezy received a note asking him to call at the office of the grocery firm of Leslie & Co.

"See here, young man," said Leslie to him in his private office, "what you did on Tuesday was a thing that could have put you behind prison bars. Do you understand?"

Privately, Breezy was skeptical, but he nodded doggedly, thinking that Leslie merely wished to abuse him, and regretting that he had come at all.

"It was pure malicious mischief in the eyes of the law," continued Leslie, "and an entirely unpardonable offense. But while this is undoubtedly so"—he talked more moderately and less harshly—"it—well, to be frank, those ads—" The remembrance of this part of Breezy's misdemeanor swelled his indignation, and he was again angry. "Those ads," he continued, "that you dutched for us—well, it was worth six months at hard confinement itself!" He glared impotently, while he got red in the face.

"Well," he began again, "as I was saying, those ads—er—well, they drew the trade, in brief, and we sold the whole hundred tubs!" He said this as though it was little short of miraculous. Breezy did not wink an eye. To him it was the natural result.

"He smiled in genuine artistic gratification"

As Breezy still held his peace, Leslie resumed: "As a result we are—er—have cleared, well, some hundred dollars."

Breezy still remained silent, and Leslie put on a pompous frown.

"Understand, young man," he declaimed, "in giving you the position of superintendent and advertising manager of this store, we most certainly wish to express our vehement displeasure at your act of Tuesday, lucky as it happened to turn out, and solemnly warn you that a repetition of such a monstrous offense will mean instant discharge. To hold this position, you will have to confine yourself to reasonable and cautious methods of doing business. Your salary will be three times your former one. Get out now, and don't bother me, but show up ready for work Monday morning."

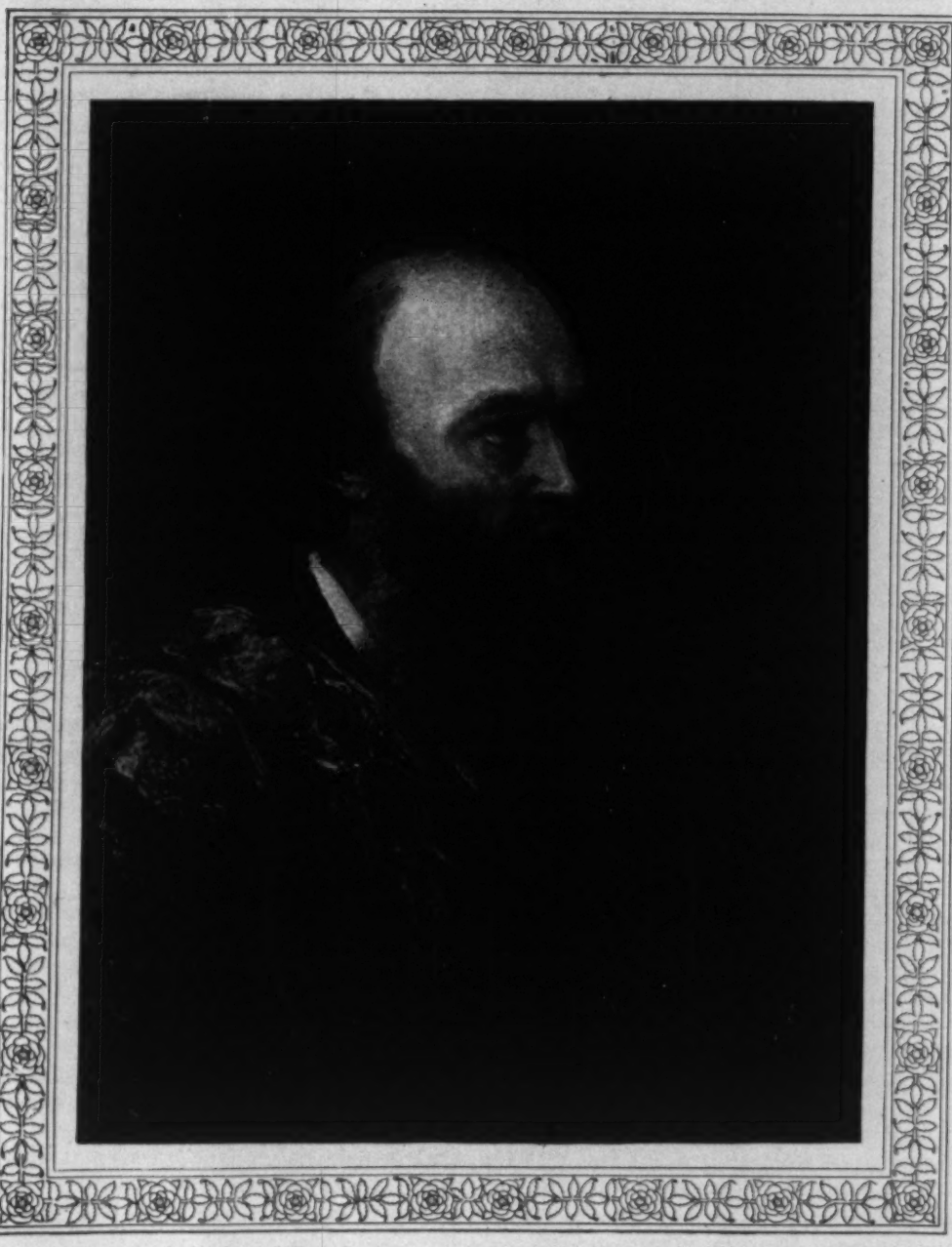
The only evidence Breezy gave of his satisfaction with this interview was that he rode madly up the full length of the steepest hill in the city on his way home, to rid himself of surplus nervous energy.

Spring

BY EDEN PHILLPOTTS

CUCKOO! Sing all the joys of June,
Cuckoo! Scent of the hawthorn spray,
Cuckoo! Elms in a haze at noon,
Cuckoo! Silver of new-mown hay.
And echo laughs upon the bosomed hills,
And echo glides the leafy glades along—
Hark how the golden sunshine throbs and thrills
With heart-beat of this old world song.

Cuckoo! The petals of a rose,
Cuckoo! A bow upon the rain,
Cuckoo! Shining the river flows,
Cuckoo! Cloud purple cools the plain.
And all the glory of the Summer's face,
And all the splendor of each Summer hue,
Make earth a jewel on the heart of space,
An opal in high heaven's blue.



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THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY, K.G.

ENGLISH STATESMEN & RULERS—II

BY GEORGE W. SMALLEY

NOT many Englishmen are less understood in the United States than Lord Salisbury. I suppose most of us set out with a prejudice against a Conservative; perhaps because we are ourselves in some important ways among the most "conservative" people in the world. We call him a Tory, and let him go at that. Time was when the name fitted well enough, but it fits no longer. There is no Tory party, there is no great body of public opinion in England, if you except the country squires and

the country parsons, to which that name can be applied rightly. Between the Lord Robert Cecil of forty years ago and the Marquis of Salisbury, who to-day governs the British Empire, there is a far greater interval than the interval of time. If we look at the two men in their relations to us, as we naturally may, the difference is complete. Lord Robert Cecil was our enemy. Than Lord Salisbury we have few better friends among Englishmen of great place. We have been slow to forgive the Lord Robert Cecil who wrote and spoke in behalf of the break-up of the Union from 1860 to 1865. We think of him, or did think of him, as the impersonation of that aristocratic hostility to the Republic which we rightly resented then, and resent still. But we forgave Mr. Gladstone, whose enmity was far more effective than Lord Robert Cecil's. Why do we not forgive the other?

Lord Salisbury and Li Hung Chang

When Mr. Blaine went to London he had a very particular dislike for Lord Salisbury, who was then Foreign Minister. He was asked, as any visitor of distinction would be, to the Foreign Office party given by Lady Salisbury as wife of the Foreign Minister. He refused to go. "I have attacked Lord Robert Cecil," said the late Secretary of State, "in terms which make it unfit for me to be his guest." He refused for the same reason to meet Lord Salisbury privately. How long ago that seems, and how unlike the easier spirit of to-day!

If Lord Salisbury has had among all ministers and statesmen of foreign powers a steadfast opponent, it is Li Hung Chang, who died only the other day. None the less, when the great Chinaman came to England did the great Englishman welcome him. As it happened, each liked the other, but the welcome would have been the same had the contrary been true. They met often and cordially. Lord Salisbury gave the Chinaman a garden party at Hatfield, and treated him almost—not quite—as a royalty. That is to say, all the other guests, the list including almost everybody of social distinction, went down from London by an earlier train, and were all assembled before Li Hung Chang arrived. Lord Salisbury drove to the station to meet him, and brought him to the house. On the steps of the garden entrance stood Lady Salisbury waiting to greet him, a mistake, no doubt, for the Chinese do not understand the customs of Western Europe with respect to women, and the expression on this Oriental's face when he beheld his hostess was peculiar. A marquee had been pitched on the terrace which looks over the beautiful Hertfordshire hills, and in this tent Li Hung Chang held a reception. Many of the most eminent men of the company were presented to him, among others Sir William Harcourt, the leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons. Sir William's political rank and importance were duly explained in advance. Li asked the usual questions, adding that he supposed the duties of such a leader were responsible and difficult. Sir William said they were, and in his turn asked a question or two.

"Is there an opposition in China?"

"There are people who are disaffected to the Government."

"But who are the leaders of this opposition?"

"There are none. We cut their heads off."

With which this interesting conversation came to an end, Sir William's head remaining on his shoulders.

The Longevity of Great Englishmen

Ever since Lord Lansdowne succeeded Lord Salisbury as Foreign Minister last year, the political gossips have from time to time given out that Lord Salisbury was about to resign his office as Prime Minister on account of ill health. But he has not resigned. His health is alleged as a reason, but it is certain that his speeches show no decay of intellectual energy. He is in his seventy-second year. Palmerston died Prime Minister at eighty-one. Gladstone was seventy-five when he withdrew in 1894. Lord Russell resigned the premiership at seventy-four, Lord Beaconsfield at seventy-six, and the Duke of Wellington remained in office till he was seventy-seven. They are a tough race, these English statesmen. They must be. Hardly ever does a man attain great eminence in English public life who has not extraordinary physical as well as intellectual powers.

"A glutton for work" is the description of Lord Salisbury by his friends. Lord Randolph Churchill, when Secretary of State for India, was asked whether the details of that office were not difficult to master. "Details," answered Lord Randolph; "you don't suppose I attend to details!" In which respect, as in many others, he was unlike his

chief. Said an official who had long worked under the Foreign Minister: "You may often see him take his work away with him. Often he deals himself with a mass of papers where an ordinary minister would be content with a *précis*."

There is a story, not too authentic, that when Lord Salisbury and Disraeli were looking after British interests at the Peace Congress of Berlin, in 1878, Prince Bismarck was asked what he thought of Lord Salisbury. "Oh," replied the German Chancellor, "Salisbury has brilliant abilities, but the Jew's the man." But the Jew is dead, and his successor is still living, and beyond doubt there remains since Bismarck's disappearance no statesman in Europe who has either Lord Salisbury's experience or his authority. His name is almost greater on the continent than at home. England has had no Foreign Minister who was his equal since Palmerston. If one quality of character be more conspicuous than another in Lord Salisbury it is patience; a profound belief in the efficacy of time. He will not be hurried. In all his diplomacy and under all kinds of pressure you will find the same note, the same tranquility, the same confidence in returning reason among rulers or people whom for the time it has deserted. His fault as a diplomatist is his inability to resist making a point.

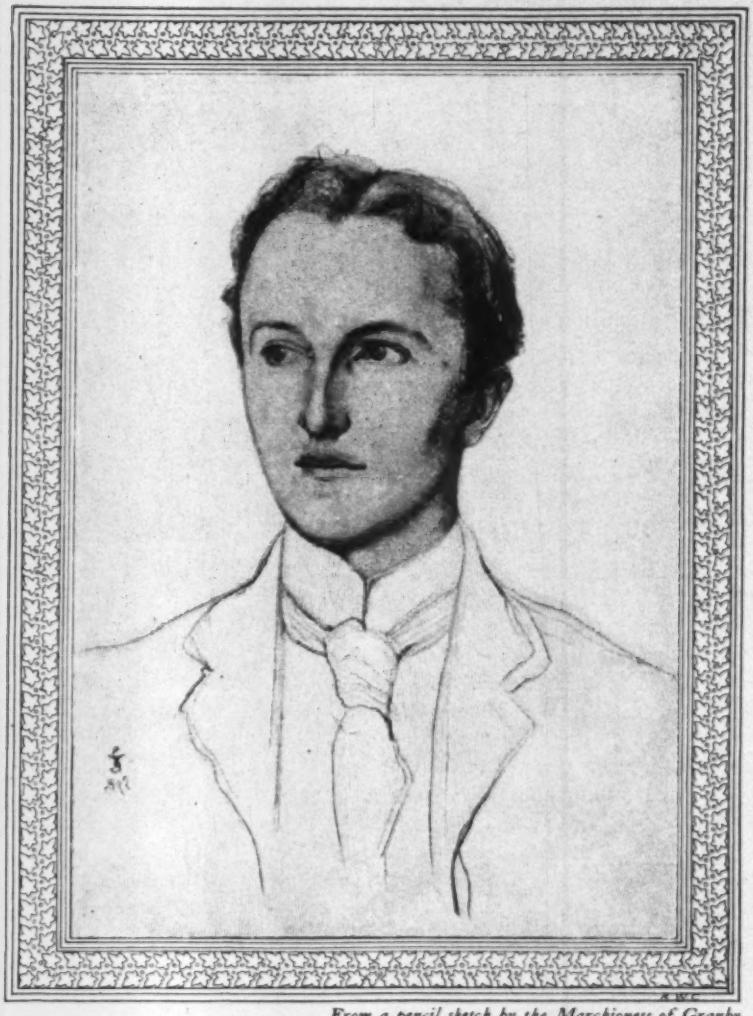
As Orator and Talker

His oratory is an appeal to the intellect. In felicity none ever excelled him, nor in that symmetrical precision of statement which convinces by mere lucidity. He speaks in the House of Lords with bent head, the shoulders also bent, the whole figure stooping. The most telling sentences come quietly from those half-closed lips. He has, or cares to practise, few of the arts of the orator except finish of diction and impregnable solidity of thought. Rhetoric he has, and a splendid rhetoric, but always subdued to his purpose. There are no fireworks for fireworks' sake. In the Lords he speaks to a hushed audience, seldom responsive, perhaps incapable of energetic emotions. On the platform the audience rises to him, but he scarce ever responds to their enthusiasm. His reserve seems impenetrable. His sense of duty touching the matter on which he discourses amounts to a religion. There is, indeed, a suggestion of the missionary in his deep and never ostentatious fervor. Mr. Gladstone's real ambition in life, it has been said, was to be Archbishop of Canterbury. He would have set fire to the church if he had been. But one can think of Lord Salisbury as a Keeper of the King's conscience and Chancellor of the realm. The Churchman is strong in him. It might be doubtful, as between Church and State, which of the two he would put first.

His talk shows, so far as talk can, the same qualities as his oratory; both are in a minor key, and in both there is a distinction which is something more than personal. The Cecils have been a great family for near four hundred years, and the latest and greatest of them is a living witness to the truth of that doctrine of transmitted capacity and character which we call heredity.

Let the reader suppose he has an appointment at the Foreign Office. He may then have such a glimpse of the *man* as no public occasion can afford. The door opens, and there enters a figure impressive, first of all, by its size and by the massiveness of the head; still more by beauty of manner. You see that this man is simply himself, perfectly natural, with a natural dignity which makes all effort needless. The face is broad, heavily molded beneath a broad forehead of which the arch rises high. The eyes are not large, deep rather, steady, penetrating, a secret fire in them ready not perhaps to blaze forth, but to burn. He sits comfortably in a corner of the sofa and talks as if he were thinking aloud, which you may be quite sure he is not. Nature first, and then diplomacy have taught him discretion, till discretion has become a second nature. He is, perhaps, the busiest man in England, but there is no sign of haste or impatience. What he has in hand that he will do, swiftly, not resting, not hasting, completely. The voice is low, the sentences smooth and of even flow; considered, reserved without the appearance of reserve.

You think yourself, as you are, in contact with a mind which has altered the course of events again and again in England and the world over. Large views, firmness, settled opinions, touches of genius, these you would expect. Then you find they may all be consistent with sweetness and light, and that to listen to conversation of this kind is an illumination. In truth, reserve or no reserve, your hour will have given you an insight into affairs, a knowledge of the governing forces of the country, and a perception of the character of him who governs, never otherwise attainable.



From a pencil sketch by the Marchioness of Granby
Photographed by Henry Dixon & Son, London

LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON

The Greatest of the Cecils

I add a purely domestic trait: Since Lady Salisbury's death the master of Hatfield takes charge of Hatfield. He administers that wonderful house and great estate as he administers the Empire, with unfailing attention to business. Each morning he sees his housekeeper and some of the head servants, so that the working of each department is known to him as is the working of the departments over which his colleagues in his cabinet preside. He has his children about him—they are children no longer. His attachment to them has brought reproach upon him, the foolish reproach of nepotism, because he has thought some of them, as they are, fit for important public posts. The Radical wits have labeled the Front Bench of the House of Commons the "Hotel Cecil"; among whose tenants are included, of course, his nephews, the two Balfours, and his son-in-law, Lord Selborne, and his son, Lord Cranborne. Nor is it Lord Salisbury's fault if another son, Lord Hugh Cecil, has made a name for himself in the House as an orator and a champion of the Church. Nor does anybody allege that any of these are unfit—their sin is that they are Cecils or of kin to the Cecils. As a host, Lord Salisbury is kindliness itself, and Hatfield, at any rate, never suggests anything but the home of the Cecils and, for the time being, of his guests. Yet his real preoccupation is public business, and personal interests sit lightly upon him in the presence of affairs. There is a story which the Foreign Office people are fond of telling: One day, in the midst of a diplomatic crisis, papers were brought to him by Mr. X., and were discussed. Exit Mr. X., and enter Mr. A., who is Lord Salisbury's official shadow; and their dialogue occurs: *Lord Salisbury:* "Mr. A., who is that intelligent young man who has just gone out?" *Mr. A.:* "That is Mr. X., one of your lordship's private secretaries."

Lord Curzon of Kedleston

The Viceroy of India is an Englishman who must interest Americans, if only because he has an American wife; and must interest them if he had not. Five years ago, Mr. George Nathaniel Curzon, as he then was, might have been reckoned among the states-

men of the future. He has passed out of that category. His early promise of distinction was long since made good, both in England and in the East—that illimitable, mysterious East which he long since took to be his province. He is a born traveler—born with the spirit of adventure; born with eyes to see. He studied China and Persia and Afghanistan in the Oriental spirit. His books are books of practical statesmanship as well as of travel.

He was one of the Master of Balliol's favorites; and that acute observer of men and things chose his favorites carefully. His appreciation was far more intellectual than sympathetic. He left his own mark on them, as the University of Oxford leaves, and as Balliol College leaves, each its own mark on those who come most completely under the influence of each. There, as later in the House of Commons, Mr. Curzon showed that he could master a subject. Nobody ever accused him of superficiality; it was rather a complaint that he knew too much, and showed too plainly that he knew it. The House of Commons resents such display in one of its younger members. He was called a "superior person." It was for some time doubtful whether he would live down this reputation of omniscience. But he did, and the House grew to respect and like the man it was for a time disposed to deride. He had too true a sense of humor to be unaware of his own defect—if excess of knowledge and an excessive use of it can be called a defect. His manner softened. He became less superior. Through this external glitter and all these accomplishments and acquired gifts shone a real sincerity of nature. He loved hard work—loved it too well for his own health. He had the passion for exact truth and fulness of knowledge which Huxley had; it was a master passion. With it went a singular flexibility. When in the East he could be, as I said, Oriental—as Oriental as the best of them; and sincerity is not primarily an Oriental quality.

Traveler and Viceroy

When Mr. Curzon went to Afghanistan as a private traveler—against the remonstrance of the India Government, which believed he was going to his death—he did not disdain to practise the wiles of the wily people whom he visited. It might have been a tragedy, but he chose to play it as a comedy. On entering Afghanistan he arrayed himself in a uniform for which no parallel or precedent could be found. It was necessary to convince the Afghans that he was a personage, and the Afghan mind could not conceive anybody to be a personage who did not present a splendid exterior. In plain garb, he might have been robbed and murdered, but the marauding bands which beset his path thought twice before they assaulted a wayfarer glittering in scarlet and gold.

But when he became Viceroy of India he ruled that imperial dependency in the spirit of England and not of the East. Then at last he could give play to his natural passion for justice and order. There at last you see the real man. In three years he has reformed the administrative system, reformed the methods of official business throughout India, inspired a great Civil Service with conceptions of duty even higher than they were, dealt with a great famine, and forestalled the famines of the future by a new scheme of irrigation on a gigantic scale. The Viceroy of India has probably in his own hands more personal power and power of initiative than any other ruler in the world. Lord Curzon has used it to the full for bettering the government of India and the condition of the people of India. Three years ago he was, as a great authority called him, "a splendid experiment." Today he has won a permanent place among the greatest Viceroys India has known. They say he is fond of magnificence. He ought to be. To rule an Oriental people according to notions of democratic simplicity is probably impossible.

How much is it permissible to say of women who have conspicuous positions in public life, and yet are not themselves burdened with its duties, except in so far as they are social duties? Not all one would like to, perhaps. Lady Curzon, as wife of the Viceroy of India, has her share in the ceremonial as well as in the private life of Lord Curzon. We all know her as of American birth, but do we all realize all that the English see so clearly? Said an English woman only the other day: "Lady Curzon's family in their origin belonged to what we should call the middle class. They rose by their own merit. Now in England a girl who in similar circumstances had passed into the viceregal state would scarcely have been all that this American is. She would have lacked distinction. Lady Curzon has not only beauty and cleverness, but the indefinable something which is associated with birth and ancestry. She is *grande dame*." Need

we add anything to that? She who said it is herself what she so truly called Lady Curzon.

The Secret of Lord Cromer's Power in Egypt

Lord Cromer is known to Americans and to the rest of mankind as the Englishman who, under the modest title of Consul-General, has governed Egypt for some twenty years, and by almost imperceptible stages has made it in effect, though not in name, an integral part of the British Empire. Till I met Lord Cromer I imagined him above all things a diplomatist, skilled in the methods of the slippery people among whom he wrought. It was a complete error. Meet him and not know who he is, you might think him a great railway president like Tom Scott, a great financier like Mr. Morgan, a great industrial chief like Mr. Carnegie. The business stamp is on him. That quiet manner hides a peremptory purpose. His easy tone is not at all inconsistent with abrupt ways of thinking and of expressing his thought. He has suavity, but it is not sustained and never failing, like that of the trained diplomatist; like Lord Dufferin's, for example. His simplicity of manner, you see, is not assumed, but natural. You reflect a little upon his extraordinary career, and you presently come to perceive that his mastery over Turks and Egyptians is due, not to his excelling them in those qualities which are characteristic of them, but to his own qualities as an Englishman. To match the suppleness of the Oriental the best weapon is an unbending backbone.

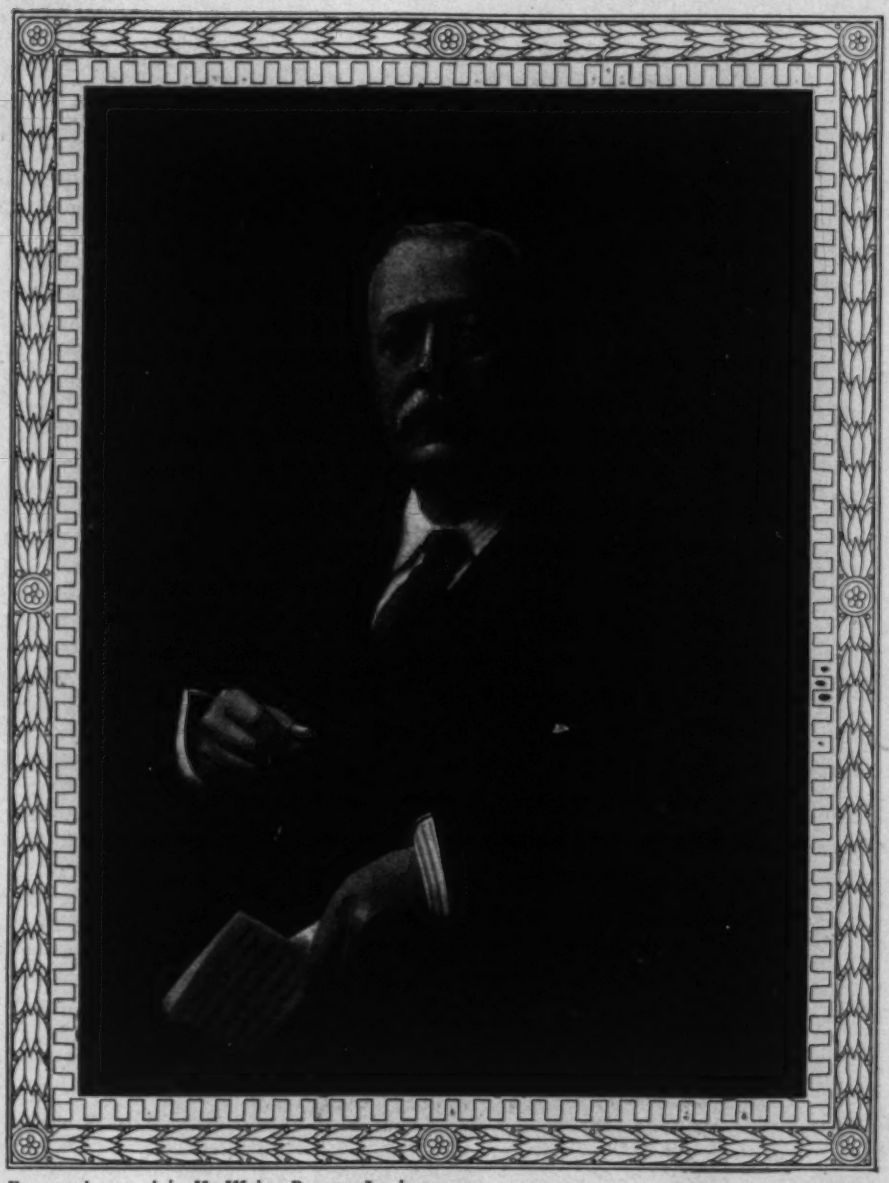
I don't think Sultan or Khedive ever understood Lord Cromer. It was not important that they should. What was important was that they should respect and fear him, and that lesson they learned early, and have never been permitted to forget. He had to deal with Europeans almost as slippery as the Orientals; and he dealt with them on the same principle. The French Consul once complained to him that the British troops with their music and marching disturbed him. "I hear them now outside your palace," he added. Said Lord Cromer, "It's because they are there that you are here." There were no more complaints. The incident became famous in Cairo, and the impression of it indelible. His twenty years of difficult rule have left him a young man at sixty, erect, alert, equal to his work, equal to physical fatigue.

Sir William Harcourt and Lord Rosebery

The events of 1886, and, above all, Mr. Gladstone's great apostasy from the old Liberalism, have had far-reaching personal as well as political consequences. It is the former with which, for the purposes of these articles, I am chiefly concerned, and I will take one of the most striking and, I will add, one of the most regrettable. Before 1886 Sir William Harcourt and Lord Rosebery were personal friends. The two men were intimate, and their families were intimate. Sir William and Lady Harcourt were frequent guests at Mentmore, the great house in Buckinghamshire which came to Lord Rosebery by his marriage with Miss Hannah Rothschild, whose father, Baron Meyer de Rothschild, built it amid 6,000 acres of park, and filled it with treasures of art. The two men who were by and by to grow so far apart had many traits in common and many ties between them. Both were students of political history in a sense wider than is common in modern political life. Both had the gift of leadership. Both had the qualities which go to the making of the accomplished orator.

Opposite circumstances gave a different bent and development to the genius of each. Lord Rosebery was never in the House of Commons; his oratory therefore became by necessity the oratory of the platform, with all the arts and graces of oratory which has to persuade, to conciliate, to move, and to captivate great audiences. Sir William has spent all his public life in the House of Commons, and his oratory is preëminently the oratory of debate. He is controversial, argumentative, a master of sudden repartee, skilled in every art of attack and defense, delighting in combat, the equal of the best, the superior of all but one or two of the very best throughout the whole of the last generation. Sir William never hesitated to measure himself with either Mr. Disraeli or Mr. Gladstone, and the prize fell sometimes to one, sometimes to the other. Of living members of the House, Mr. Chamberlain alone can be thought his rival, for Mr. Balfour is unequal, and it needs a great occasion to bring out his powers.

Again the analogy holds between Sir William and Lord Rosebery if you think of them as talkers. Of living experts in the rare and difficult art of conversation, these two are the first. Each talks, as Dr. Johnson said of Burke, from a full mind. The years



From a photograph by H. Walter Barnett, London

LORD CROMER

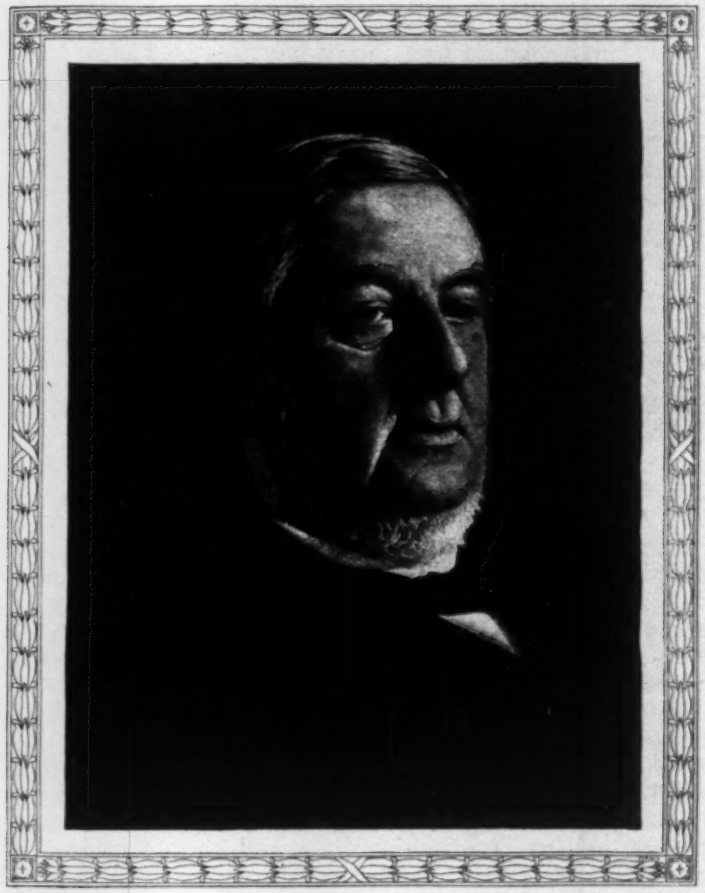
between the two are twenty; yet what has age to do with the matter when the powers of the younger have ripened, and those of the elder are not merely unimpaired, but have all the freshness and impulse of youth? When you heard Sir William and Lord Rosebery together you might think that nothing could surpass them in range and precision and splendor, until Mr. Gladstone also entered the arena, or until you met any one of the three alone and in the mood to pour out his soul for the mere sake of pouring it out. Then you might think this last the most perfect of all. To neither in these days will the statement of an analogy or comparison be grateful; the breach between them is too wide. But I prefer to think of them as the friends they once were.

I don't care to trace the steps by which this friendship grew cold and then ceased to be a friendship. Politics, political rivalry, political ambition, and the disturbance of what seemed settled conditions of political life, were the cause of the trouble. Ought Sir William and not Lord Rosebery to have been Prime Minister in 1894? Did the

leader of the House of Commons give a loyal, ungrudging support to the leader of the party? Was either to blame, or were both, or was neither, and were both the victims of circumstance and the sport of conflicting, irresistible forces? Who can answer these questions? It is more than enough to ask them.

Sir William Harcourt's Greatest Achievement

Sir William Harcourt is entitled, of course, to be considered by himself, and not with reference to friend or enemy. A man who has been again and again a Cabinet Minister; who has led the House of Commons as it likes to be led, with authority, and yet with tact; who is a jurist, a great financier, a great debater, and who but for circumstances would have been Prime Minister—he surely needs no bracketing with anybody to bring out the points of his tremendous individuality. He has always been, I like to think, beloved of Americans; and not only because he married the daughter of one of the most American and most brilliant Ministers our Government ever sent abroad. Lady Harcourt's father, Mr. Motley, was one of those men of letters who held an early place in the tradition which made eminence in literature a reason for high diplomatic honors. He knew England and England knew him, and loved him. He gave his daughter to an Englishman little known in those days except as a leading counsel at the Parliamentary bar. Perhaps no man foresaw to what political heights he was to rise. Surely none guessed that this born aristocrat of ancient lineage was to bring in, and carry, and impose upon his country as a permanent part of its finance, the most democratic budget of his own or any other time. It was, in truth, even more socialistic than democratic. I offer you that fact as illustrative of the man. Perhaps none other paints him so well. He trod under foot all the prejudices and sympathies of class—of his own class—in order to relieve other classes from what he thought an excessive burden of taxation, and lay it upon the shoulders of landowners and millionaires, the former already over-burdened. Consider the detachment of mind necessary to such a feat as that. Consider the courage. Consider the intellectual hardihood of it and the profound sense of political expediency which underlay such a scheme. Perhaps only the then Chancellor of the Exchequer was capable of that audacity, and he only because he was Sir William Harcourt.



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SIR WILLIAM VERNON HARCOURT, M.P.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach

In Cabinets, as elsewhere, it is the *man* who counts, and counts for more than the office. Mr.

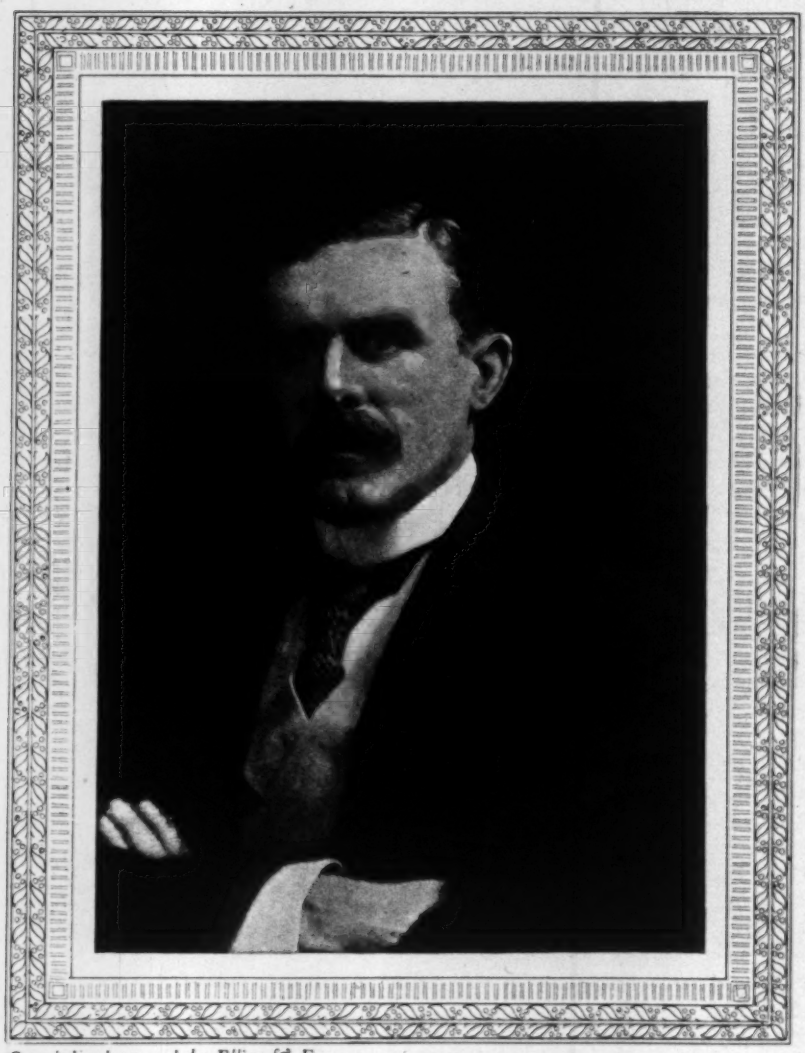
Taken by special permission of Sir M. Hicks-Beach from the painting by Henry T. Wells, R.A., which hangs in the drawing-room of the residence of the Lord Chancellor, Whitehall

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH

Chamberlain is one proof of it, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach is another. The will, that is the man, said Emerson. Sir Michael is Chancellor of the Exchequer. He keeps the purse of the nation, and the power of the purse in these days is, by the consent of everybody, the final power. But whether Sir Michael Hicks-Beach were Chancellor of the Exchequer or Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, he would be a power in the Cabinet; for Sir Michael Hicks-Beach is, and has ever been, one of those men who know their own minds, and who have the courage to make other men know it, and respect it. He holds mere office cheap in comparison with his convictions. He is in office to make his convictions prevail; if he cannot do that, out he will go. It does not follow that he is impracticable or incapable of working with other men. He has proved by many years of service that he can. But he has a financial conscience which will not stretch very far. If it were necessary to believe the current gossip of London, he has often refused to put into the estimates the sums which his colleagues of the great spending departments, the War Office and the Admiralty, thought needful. He has, at times, if not habitually, "starved" the services. But he has found the money to carry on the war in South Africa, and poured it out unstintedly. Nevertheless, he has been a check. He might be called what the late Mr. Washburne, afterward Minister to Paris, used to be called in the House of Representatives, the Watch-dog of the Treasury.

He has the advantage—it is sometimes a very great advantage—of a hot, imperious, temper. The cynic of society says his colleagues are afraid of him. It is not easy to conceive of Mr. Chamberlain or the Duke of Devonshire as afraid of anybody, or likely to be turned from their duty by a threat of resignation. Still, it is known that Sir Michael would resign a dozen times over sooner than agree to spend money profligately, or impose taxes he thought unnecessary.

Of course he makes enemies. When he led the House of Commons, as he did with inflexible determination and some disregard of his followers' susceptibilities, the Irish detested him. He led, perhaps, rather too much as a colonel of cavalry leads his regiment into action. Not an orator, he can speak and speak well; sometimes the more effectively because he pays little heed to



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THE RT. HON. ST. JOHN BRODRICK, M.P.

rhetoric. You cannot conceive of him as sacrificing his cause to an epigram—a reproach which has been addressed to a very distinguished living American. Yet of epigram he is capable enough. His appeal is to the reason, not the heart. He moves on straight lines. He bends his black brows on an opponent or on an audience in the same spirit. I imagine few men holding high office are less loved, or care less to be loved or to win the affection of those about him. I am sure none is more respected.

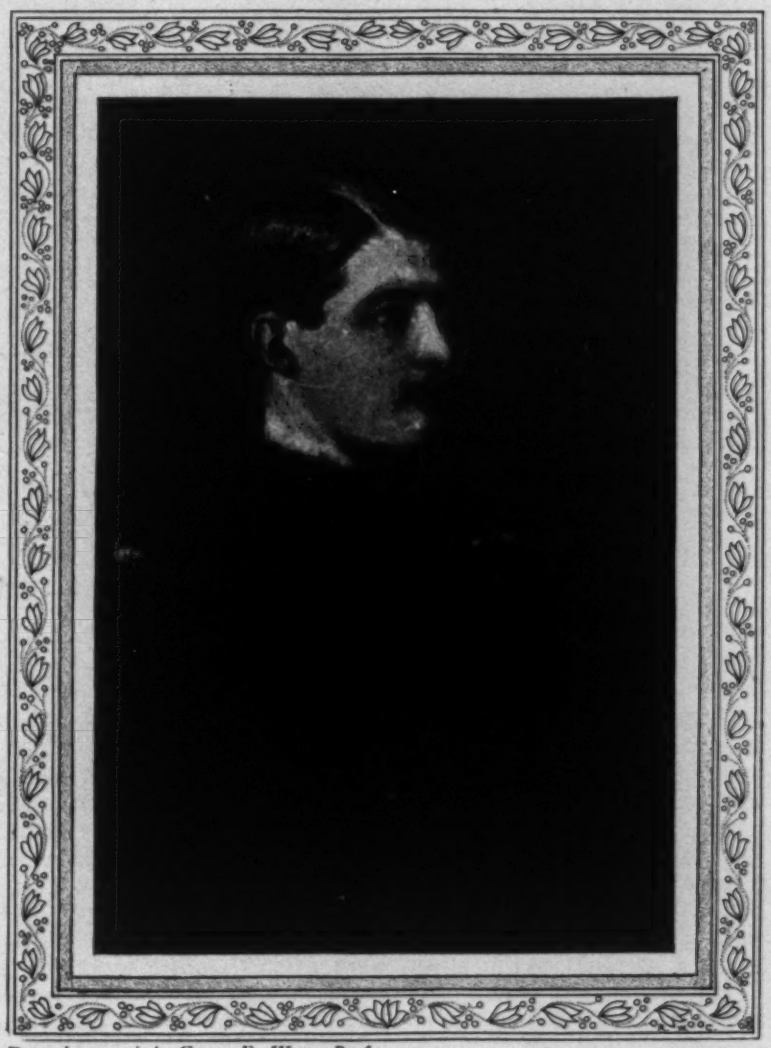
St. John Brodrick

The number of comparatively young men who have come to the front during the last ten years is at least as great in the Unionist party as in the Liberal. Among them is St. John Brodrick, now his Majesty's Secretary of State for War, in succession to Lord Lansdowne, the present Foreign Minister. Painstaking, exact, capable of much patient toil, capable of mastering his subject, he was always a good example of the higher order of civil servant in England; where the Civil Service is a profession and a permanent career.

He had from the beginning a departmental mind, and has it still, but he has more than that. He came into the War Office at a difficult moment, in the midst of a great and greatly mismanaged war. He had simultaneously to put many crooked things, in actual warfare, straight, and to reorganize the military system of Great Britain. He had, at the same time, to meet all comers in the House of Commons; all kinds of criticism and attack. Mr. Brodrick has shown in these complicated circumstances good temper and resource. A genial nature stands him in good stead.

There came upon him in the unrelaxing pressure of all these duties a domestic calamity like that which earlier befell Lord Salisbury. It was characteristic, not only of the two men, but of English public life, that neither of them flinched. The King's Government, to quote once more the celebrated phrase of the Duke of Wellington, had to be carried on; and was. Lady Hilda Brodrick had that position in English society which, as in so many other cases,

enabled her to be a real help to her husband in his political career. Probably nowhere else in these days is a wife, to put it bluntly, so useful a partner to a public man as in England. If the *salon* no longer exists, the country-house exists, and London drawing-rooms exist, and if none of them existed, a clever and capable woman with charm of manner and of character would soon create something to take their place. So in Mr. Brodrick's behalf were steadily at work those subtle influences which, in a different way, are not less potent than when a card for Almacks meant a vote in a doubtful division, or when Lady Palmerston's invitation was sufficient to soften the scruples of some nominal supporter of the Government who took the unwarrantable liberty of thinking for himself. Lady Hilda came of a family renowned for social gifts; a daughter of that Earl of Wemyss who at eighty-three is still one of the youngest men of the time; versatile, energetic, original, and absolutely independent in speech and thought. Not to her husband only is the death of such a woman a calamity; it brought sorrow to that brilliant society in which she played a part so brilliant. But the Wheel of Things, as Mr. Kipling has it, rolls on, and the Minister of War knows nothing of the private grief of Mr. Brodrick. Again I say that is the admirable spirit of public life in England, and a spirit not less admirable has of late been seen in the United States. Why may I not mention Mr. Hay as an example of it?



From the portrait by George F. Watts, R.A.

THE RT. HON. GEORGE WYNDHAM, M.P.

Mr. George Wyndham

Another and younger among these rising or risen young men is Mr. George Wyndham, now Chief Secretary for Ireland; often, if not always, the most trying post in which a young man, or an old one, can be placed. He is the ruler of Ireland. The Lord Lieutenant, to whom he is Chief Secretary, is not much more than a figure-head, or may not be. He is a man of contrasts; an habitual urbanity of demeanor hiding a certain fire in his inmost soul which, on due occasion, breaks out and adds something to the general temperature of the House.

I may as well take Mr. Wyndham as an illustration of that high sense of obligation to the State which leads so many English-

men to serve the State and serve it well, having, nevertheless, every inducement to idleness. Mr. Wyndham might, if he liked, be purely ornamental. He prefers to be useful. He accepts duties which to many would seem thankless, asking for no thanks, but just doing them because they are duties. He carries on the tradition, centuries old in England, that the higher a man's place in the social scale, the more imperative are the duties devolving upon him.

The word "duty" recurs often. How should it not when it permeates the life of England, and is, with her most privileged sons, so often a synonym for sense of honor? Very likely Mr. Wyndham never thought of it himself, or never thought it a thing worth notice. That also is characteristic of his class. Ambitious they may be, and so much the better; but they don't do things for effect. Mr. Wyndham, like the rest, has simplicity.

THE LONELY ROOM

BY PAUL KESTER

THESE walls
Are suddenly grown bare
And strange to me.
All that yesterday made up
The intimate
Frame and compass of our lives
Is changed.
This is no longer home;
It is as chill and desolate
As I.
It seems a thousand years,
Or never,
Since you crossed
The threshold,
Since you went away
And took the very heart of things,—
The sense of home,
Of comfort,
Of companionship.
Even the familiar look
Quitted the house with you.
I close the doors,
I put the lights out
Deliberately,
One by one;
The darkness, too,
Is desolate and strange.

THE CONFINES OF CONSISTENCY

BY GEORGE MADDEN MARTIN

Illustrated by C. L. Hinton

AUNT LOUISE was opposed to the Public School.

Uncle Charlie said he feared Aunt Louise did not appreciate the Democratic Institutions of her country.

Emmy Lou caught the word—democratic; later she had occasion to consider it further.

Aunt Louise said that Uncle Charlie was quite right in his fear, and the end was that Emmy Lou was started at Private School.

But it was not a School—it was only a Parlor;—and there being a pupil more than there were accommodations, and Emmy Lou being the newcomer, her portion was a rocking-chair and a lap-board.

There was not even a real Teacher; only an old lady who called one "my dear."

At home Emmy Lou cried with her head buried in Aunt Cordelia's new bolster sham; for how could she confess to Hattie and to Rosalie that it was a parlor and a lap-board?

Upon consultation, Uncle Charlie said, let her do as she pleased, since damage to her seemed to be inevitable either way. So, Emmy Lou, rejoicing, departed one morning for the Grammar School.

Public School being different from Private School, Emmy Lou at once began to learn things. For instance, at Grammar School, one no longer speaks of boys in undertones. One assumes an attitude of having always known boys. At Grammar School, classes attend Chapel. There are boys in Chapel, still separated from the girls, to be sure, after the manner of the goats from the sheep; but after one learns to laugh from the corners of one's eyes at boys, a dividing line of mere aisle is soon bridged. Watching Rosalie, Emmy Lou discovered this.

There was a boy in Chapel whom she knew, but it takes courage to look out of the corners of one's eyes, and Emmy Lou could only find sufficient to look straight, which is altogether a different thing. But the boy saw her. Emmy Lou looked away quickly.

Once the boy's name had been Billy; later, at dancing school, it was Willie; now, the Principal who conducted Chapel Exercises, called him William.

Emmy Lou liked this Principal. He had white hair, and when it fell into his eyes he would stand it wildly over his head, running his fingers through its thickness; but one did not laugh, because of greater interest in what he said.

Emmy Lou asked Rosalie the Principal's name, but Rosalie was smiling backward at a boy as the classes filed out of Chapel. Afterward she explained that his name was Mr. Page.

At Grammar School, Emmy Lou continued to learn things. The pupils of a Grammar School abjure school bags; a Geography now being a folio volume measurable in square feet, it is the thing to build upon its basic foundation an edifice of other text-books, and carry the sum total to and fro on an aching arm.

Nor do Grammar School pupils bring lunch; they bring money, and buy lunch—pies, or doughnuts, or pickles—having done with the infant pabulum of primary bread and butter.

Nor does so big a girl as a Grammar School pupil longer confess to any infantile abbreviation of entitlement; she gives her full baptismal name and is written down, as in Emmy Lou's case, Emily Louise Pope MacLaurin, which has its drawbacks; for she sometimes fails to recognize the unaccustomed sound of that name when called unexpectedly from the platform.

For at twelve years, an Emmy Lou finds herself dreaming, and watching the clouds through the school-room windows. The reading-lesson concerns one Alnaschar, the Barber's Fifth Brother; and while the verses go droningly round, the calcimined blue walls fade, and one wanders the market-place of Bagdad, amid bales of rich stuffs, and trays of golden trinkets, and mysteries that trouble not, purveyors and Mussalmen, eunuchs and seraglios, khans, mosques, drachmas—one has no idea what they mean, nor does one care; on every hand in Life lie mysteries, why not in books? The thing is, to seize upon the Story, and to let the other go.

And so Emily Louise fails to answer to the baptismal fullness of her name spoken from the platform, until at a neighbor's touch she springs up, blushing.

But, somehow, she did not take the reproach in Miss Amanda's voice to heart; Miss Amanda was given to saying reproachfully, "Please, p-ple-e-ase,—young *la*dies," many times a day, but after a brief pause one returned to pleasant converse with a neighbor.

Jokes were told about Miss Amanda among the girls, and, gathering at recess about her desk, her pupils would banter Miss Amanda as to who was her favorite, whereupon, she, pleased and fluttered, would make long and detailed refutation of any show of partiality.

Miss Amanda pinned a bow in her hair, and wore a chain, and rings, and was given to frequent patting and pushing of her hair into shape; was it possible Miss Amanda felt herself to be—*pretty?*

Ordinarily, however, Emily Louise did not think much about her one way or another, except at those times when Miss Amanda tried to be funny; then she quite hated her with unreasoning fierceness.

Right now Miss Amanda was desiring Emily Louise MacLaurin to give attention.

Once a week there was public recitation in the Chapel. Mr. Page considered it good for boys and girls to work together, which was a new way of regarding it peculiar to Grammar School, for hitherto, boys, like the skull and cross-bones bottles in Aunt Cordelia's closet, had been things to be avoided.

"To-morrow," Miss Amanda was explaining, "the Chapel recitation will be in Grammar; you will conjugate," Miss Amanda simpered, "the verb—to love," with playful meaning in her emphasis; "but I need have no fear, young ladies," archly, "that you will let yourselves be beaten at this lesson."

Miss Amanda meant to be funny. Emily Louise, for one, looked stonily ahead; not for anything would she smile.

But the weekly recitation varied, and there came a week when the classes were assembled for a lesson in Composition.

Mr. Page laughed at what he called flowery effusions. "Use the matter and life about you," he said.

"There is one boy," he went on to state, "whose compositions are generally good for that reason. William, step up, sir, and let us hear what you have made of this."

William arose. He was still square, but he was no longer short; there was a straight and handsome bridge to his nose, and he had taken to tall collars. William's face was somewhat suffused at this summons to publicity, but his smile was cheerful and unabashed. His composition was on "Conscience." So were the compositions of the others; but his was different.

"A boy has one kind of a conscience," read William, "and a girl has another kind. Two girls met a cow. 'Look her right in the face and pretend like we aren't afraid,' said the biggest girl; but the littlest girl had a conscience. 'Won't it be deceiving the cow?' she wanted to know."

Emily Louise blushed; how could William! For Emily Louise was "the littlest girl"; Hattie was the other; and William had come along and driven the cow away.

William was still reading: "There was a girl found a quarter in the snow. She thought how it would buy five pies, or ten doughnuts, or fifteen pickles, and then she thought about the person who would come back and find the place in the snow and no quarter, and so she went and put the quarter back."

How could William! Mr. Page, his hair wildly rumpled, was clapping hand to knee; even the teachers were trying not to smile. Emily Louise blushed hotter, for Emily

Louise, taking the quarter back, had met William.

"Boys are different," stated William's composition. "There was a boy went to the office to be whipped. The strap hit a stone in his pocket. So the Principal, who went around on Saturdays with a hammer tapping rocks, let the boy off. He didn't know the boy got the rock out the alley on purpose. But I reckon boys have some kind of a conscience. That boy felt sort of mean."

It was the teachers who were laughing now, while Mr. Page, running his fingers through his hair, wore a smile—arrested, reflective, considering.

"One finds oneself dreaming, and watching the clouds through the school-room window"

But it broadened: there are Principals, here and there, who can appreciate a William.

The cheek of Emily Louise might be hot, but in her heart was a newer feeling; was it pleasure? Something, somewhere, was telling Emily Louise that William liked her

the better for these things he was laughing at. Was she pleased thereat? Never. Her cheek grew hotter. Yet the pleasurable sensation was there. Suddenly she understood. It was because of this tribute to the condition of her conscience. Of course it would be perfectly proper, therefore, to determine to keep up this reputation with William.

There was other proof that William liked her. At Grammar School it was the proper thing to own an autograph album. William's page in the album of Emily Louise was a triumph in purple ink upon a pinkish background. Not that William had written it. Jimmy Reed had written it for him. Jimmy wielded a master pen in flourish and shading, upon which he put a price accordingly. A mere name cost the patrons of Jimmy a pickle, while a pledge to eternal friendship or sincerity was valued at a doughnut. For the feelings in verse, one paid a pie.

William had paid a pie, and his sentiments at maximum price thus set forth declared:

"True friendship is a golden knot
Which angles' hands have tied,
By heavenly skill its textures wrought,
Who shall its folds divide?"

Emily Louise wondered about the angles' hands. What were they? It never suggested itself that a master of the pen such as Jimmy might be weak in spelling.

One has to meet new responsibilities at Grammar School, too; one has to be careful with whom one associates.

Associate was Isobel's word; she used many impressive words, but then Isobel was different; she spelled her name with an o, and she did not live in a home; Isobel lived in a hotel, and her Papa was the holder of a Government Position. Hattie's Papa, some one told Emily Louise, had wanted to hold it, but Isobel's Papa got it.

Isobel said a person must discriminate. This Emily Louise found meant move in groups that talked each about the others. Isobel and Rosalie pointed out to Emily Louise that the nice girls were in their group.

Yet Hattie was not in it; Emily Louise wondered why.

"It depends on who you are," said Isobel, with the sweeping calmness of one whose position is assured. "My Papa is own second cousin to the Attorney-General of the United States."

And that this claim conveyed small meaning to the group about Isobel, made her family connections by no means the less impressive and to be envied. The Isobels supply their part of the curriculum of Grammar School.

Emily Louise went home anxious. "Have I a family?" she inquired.

"It's hard to say since you abandoned it," said Uncle Charlie.

Emily Louise blushed; she did not feel just happy in her mind yet about those dolls buried in a mausoleum-like trunk in the attic.

She explained; the kind of family that has a Tree? Did she belong to a Family? Had she a Tree?

"The only copper beech in town," said Uncle Charlie.

But Aunt Cordelia's vulnerable spot was touched; she grew quite heated. Emily Louise learned that she was a Pringle and a Pope.

"And a MacLaurin?" queried Emily Louise.

But Aunt Cordelia's enthusiasm had cooled.

There came a time when Emily Louise divined why. All at once talk began at school about a thing looming ahead, called an Election. It seemed a disturbing thing, keeping Uncle Charlie at the office all hours. And when in time it actually arrived, Emily Louise could not go to school that day because the way would take her past the Polls. Yet ordinarily this was only the Grocery; but so dreadful a place is it when it becomes a Poll, that Aunt Cordelia could not go to it for her marketing.

Hitherto, except when Miss Amanda wanted to be funny, Emily Louise had felt her to be inoffensive; but as Election became the absorbing topic of Grammar School, a dreadful thing came to light—Miss Amanda was a Republican.

Hattie told Emily Louise; her voice was low and full of horror. For Hattie reflected the spirit of her State and Age; the State was in the South, the year was preceding the '80's.

Emily Louise lowered her voice, too; it was to ask just what is a Republican. She was conscious of a vagueness.

Hattie looked at her, amazed. "A Republican—why—people who are not Democrats—of course."

"How does one know which one is?" asked Emily Louise, feeling that it would be disconcerting, considering public opinion, to find herself a Republican.

Hattie looked tried. "You're what your Father is, naturally. I should think you'd know that, Emily Louise."

On the way from school William joined Emily Louise.

"What's a Republican, William?" she asked.

His countenance changed. "It's—well—it's the sort you don't want to have anything to do with," said William darkly.

Emily Louise, knowing how William regarded her conscientiousness, was uneasy because of a certain recollection. She must get to the bottom of this. She sought Aunt Louise privately. "Are—aren't you a Democrat?" she inquired.

The indignant response of Aunt Louise was disconcerting. "What else could you dream I am?" she demanded with asperity.

"You said you didn't approve of Democratic Institutions," explained Emily Louise, recalling.

"I approve of nothing under Republican domination," said Aunt Louise haughtily. Which was muddling.

"What's Papa?" asked Emily Louise suddenly.

Aunt Louise, dressing for a party, shut her door sharply.

One could ask Aunt Cordelia. But Aunt Cordelia turned testy, and even told Emily Louise to run away.

Uncle Charlie was gone.

There were Aunt M'randa and Tom, so Emily Louise sought the kitchen. It was after supper. Tom was spelling the news from a paper spread on the table, and Aunt M'randa was making up the flannel cakes for breakfast.

"Who? Yo' paw?" said Tom. "He's a Republican; he done edit that kinder paper over 'cross the Ohier River, he does."

There was unction in the glib quickness of Tom's reply. Then he dodged; it was just in time.

"Shet yo' mouf," said Aunt M'randa with wrath; "ain't I done tole' how they've kep' it from de chile."

Emily Louise was swallowing hard. "Then—then—am I a Republican?" Her voice sounded way off.

Aunt M'randa turned a scandalized face upon her last baby in the family. "Co'se yer ain't, chile; huccome yer think sech er thing? Ain't yer done learned it's sinnahs is lumped wi' Publicans—po' whites, an' cul'd folks an' sech?"

The comfort in Aunt M'randa's reassuring was questionable. "But—you said—my Papa—" said Emily Louise.

The tension demanded relief. Aunt M'randa turned on Tom. "I lay I bus' yo' haid open ef yer don't quit yo' stan'in' wi' yer mouf' gapin' at de trouble yer done made."

Aunt M'randa was sparring for time.

"Don' yer worry 'bout dat, honey"—this to Emily Louise—"hit's jes' one dese here mistakes in jogaphy, seem like, same es yer tell erbout gettin' kep' in foh. Huccome a gen'man like yo' paw got bawn y'other side de Ohier River, 'ceptin' was an acci-dent? Des tell me dat? But dere's 'nough quality dishere side de fam'ly to keep yer a good Dem'crat, honey—" and Aunt M'randa, muttering, glared at Tom.

"Miss Amanda, pleased and flattered, would make long, detailed refutation of any show of partiality"

For Emily Louise was gazing into a gulf wider than the river rolling between home and Papa—a gulf called War; nor did Emily Louise know, as Aunt M'randa knew, that it was a baby's little fists clutching at Aunt Cordelia that had bridged that gulf.

Emily Louise turned away—her Papa was that thing for lowered voice and bated breath—her Papa—was a Republican.

Then Emily Louise was a Republican also. Hattie said so; Aunt M'randa did not know. At twelve one begins determinedly to face facts.

Yet the very next day Emily Louise made the discovery that a greater than her Papa had been that thing for lowered tones. She was working upon her weekly Composition, and this week the subject was "George Washington."

Emily Louise had just set forth upon legal cap her opening conclusions upon the matter. She had gone deep into the family annals of George, for, by nature, Emily Louise was thorough, and William had testified that she was conscientious.

"George Washington was a great man and so was his mother."

Here she paused, pen suspended; for the full meaning of a statement in the History spread before her had suddenly dawned upon her; for that History declared George Washington "a firm advocate for these Republican principles."

Should an Emily Louise then turn traitor to her father, or should she desert an Aunt Cordelia and an Aunt Louise?

Life is complex. At twelve a pucker of absorption and concentration begins to gather between the brows.

On the homeward way, William was waiting at the corner. "What is a person when they are not either Democrat or Republican?" Emily Louise asked as they went along.

William's tones were uncompromising. "A Mugwump," he said, and he said it with contempt.

It sounded unpleasant, and as though it ought to merit the contempt of William.

And Grammar was becoming as complex as life itself. One forenoon Emily Louise was called upon to recite the Rule. Every day it was a different Rule, which in itself was discouraging. But the Exceptions were

worse than the Rule; for a Rule is a matter of a mere paragraph, while the Exceptions are measurable by pages.

But Emily Louise knew the Rule. Even with town one background for flag and bunting; even with the streets one festive processional; even with the advent, in her city, of the President of the United States on his tour of the South; even with this in her civic precincts, Emily Louise, arising, was able correctly to recite the Rule.

"An Article should only be used once before a complex description of one and the same object."

"An example," said Miss Amanda.

Emily Louise stood perplexed, for none had been given in the book.

"Simply apply the Rule and make your own," said Miss Amanda.

But it did not seem simple; Emily Louise was still thinking in the concrete.

Hattie had grasped abstractions. Hattie waved her hand. There was a scarlet spot upon her cheek. Before school there had been words between Hattie and Isobel. The politics of the President of the United States had figured in it, and Emily Louise had learned that the President was a Republican. And yet flags! And processions!

Miss Amanda said, "Well, Hattie?"

Hattie arose. "There is a single, only, solitary Republican pupil in this class," said she promptly and with emphasis.

Miss Amanda might proceed to consider the proposition grammatically, her mind being on the Rule, and not the import, but the class interpreted it as Hattie meant they should. In their midst! And unsuspected!

Emily Louise grew hot. Could Hattie, would Hattie, do this thing? Hattie, accuse her thus? Yet who else could Hattie mean? The heart of Emily Louise swelled—Hattie to do this thing!

"For one's feelings in verse, one paid a pie"

And Hattie was wrong. She should know that she was wrong. She should read it in her own autograph album, just brought to Emily Louise for her inscribing. Emily Louise remained in at recess. Verse was beyond her. She recognized her limitations. Some are born to prose and some to higher things. She applied herself to a plain statement in Hattie's album:

Dear Hattie:

I am a Mugwump and your true friend.

EMILY LOUISE MACLAURIN.

Then she put the book on Hattie's desk as the bell rang.

With the class came a visible and audible excitement. Mr. Page followed, his hair wildly erect, and he conversed with Miss Amanda hurriedly.

With visual signaling and labial dumb show, Emily Louise implored enlightenment.

"Ours is the honor class; so we're to be chosen," enunciated Hattie, in a staccato whisper.

Rosalie was nearer. "There's to be a presentation—in the Chapel," whispered Rosalie; "sh-h—he's going to choose us—now——"

Mr. Page and Miss Amanda were surveying the class. Some two score pairs of eager eyes sought each to stay those glances upon themselves. Perhaps Mr. Page lacked courage. "The choice I leave to you," said he to Miss Amanda. Then he went.

Miss Amanda was also visibly excited. She settled her chain and puffed the elaborate coiffure of her hair, the while she continued to survey the class. She looked hesitant and undecided, glancing from row to row; then, as from some inspiration, her face cleared and she grew arch, shaking a finger playfully. "To the victors belong the spoils," she said with sprightly humor, "and it will, at least, narrow the choice. I will ask those young ladies whose fathers chance to be of a Republican way of thinking to please arise."

A silence followed—a silence of disappointment to the many; then Emily Louise MacLaurin arose.

Was retribution following thus fast because of that subterfuge of Mugwump? Alas for that conscientiousness of which she

had once been proud! Was it the measure of her degradation she read on Rosalie's startled face—Rosalie's face of stricken incredulity and amaze? But no; Rosalie's transfixed gaze was not on Emily Louise—it passed her, to——

To where in the aisle beyond stood another —Isobel.

But the head of Isobel was erect, and her eyes flashed triumph; her shoulders flung defiance back in the moment of being chosen.

Excitement quivered the voice of Miss Amanda's announcement. "The wife of the President of the United States, young ladies, having signified her intention of to-day visiting our School, the young ladies standing will report to the office at once, to receive instructions as to their part in the programme; though first, perhaps"—did Miss Amanda read sex through self—"a little smoothing of hair—and ribbons——"

Emily Louise carried her news home doubtfully, for Aunt Louise and Aunt Cordelia were of such violent Democracy.

"You were chosen"—Aunt Louise repeated—"Isobel to make the speech, and you to present the flowers?" Aunt Louise's face was alight with excitement and inquiry. "And what did you do, Emmy Lou?"

"I gave them to her up on the platform; it was a pyramid in a lace paper—the bouquet."

"And then?" Aunt Louise was breathless with attention.

"She kissed me," said Emily Louise.

Aunt Louise gave a little laugh of gratification and pride. "The wife of the President—why, Emmy Lou——"

"I'll write to her Aunt Katie this very afternoon," said Aunt Cordelia.

But Emily Louise went out and sat on the side-door step; she needed solitude for the readjustment of her ideas.

Aunt Cordelia was pleased, and Aunt Louise was proud.

And Emily Louise, with the kiss of Republicanism upon her cheek, had stepped down from the Chapel platform into ovation and adulation, to find herself the center of a homeward group jostling for place beside her. Hattie had carried her books, Rosalie her jacket. William had nodded to her at the corner with an incidental carelessness of manner, and joined the group. Emily Louise had stolen a glance at William, anxiously. Had William's opinion of her fallen? It would seem not.

Yet Isobel had gone home alone. Emily Louise had seen her starting, with sidewise glance and lingering saunter should any be meaning to overtake her. But she had gone on alone.

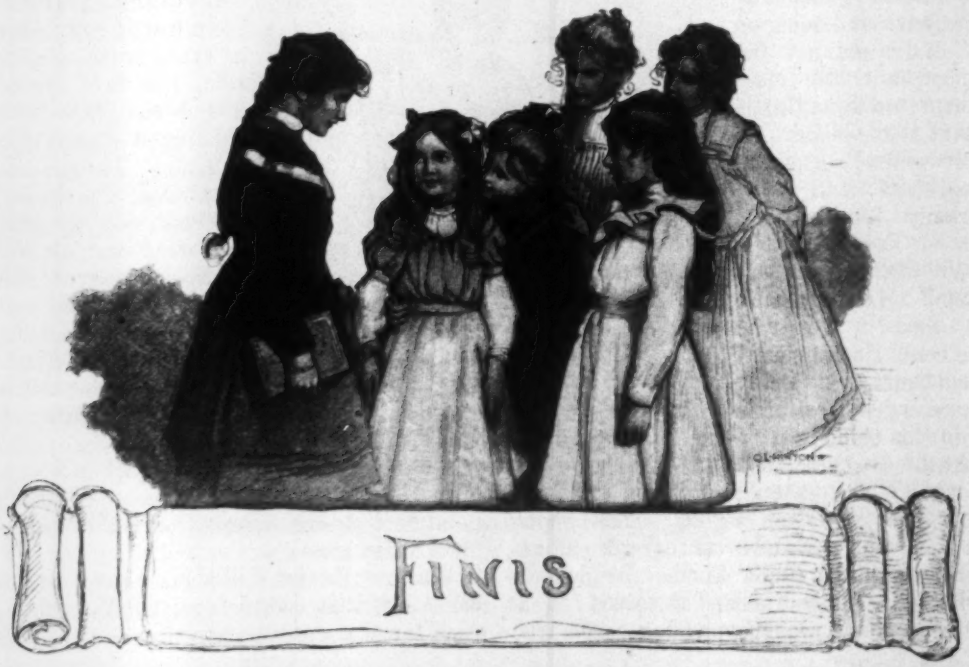
"Because she never told," said Hattie.

"Until she wanted to be chosen," said Rosalie.

"But I never told," said Emily Louise.

Hattie was final. "It's different," said Hattie.

The sun went down; the dusk grew chill. Emily Louise sat on the door-step, chin in palm.



"'I guess you think I'm usin' you mean, Elviny'"

THE CONVERSION OF ELVINY

A Story of the New Mennonites

BY H. R. MARTIN

Illustrated by Charlotte Harding

"AMAZIAH, you dare read off your composition now," said Eli Darmstetter, addressing the largest pupil of the class that sat before him in his school-room, one warm afternoon in April.

Eli taught the free school of Canaan, a small country district in southeastern Pennsylvania, and though he was a graduate of the "Millersville Normal," he had not lost his native provincial tongue, a unique dialect grown out of the free translation into English of what is known as "Pennsylvania Dutch." Neither had he lost, in the dignity of being the district teacher, the familiar designation of "Eli," not only because he had all his life lived in this neighborhood, but also because most of his pupils' parents professed the ascetic New Mennonite faith, and the custom of that sect in addressing all men by their Christian names (based on the Scriptural injunction, "Call no man master") had become the conventionally polite form of the district.

Amaziah cleared his throat, stole a hasty side glance at Elviny on his right, and coloring deeply rose to "read off" his composition.

Amaziah was a stalwart young man of twenty; his sun-browned face and hands bore evidence that he was a son of the soil, and his countenance, though somewhat heavy, was so open and honest, his eyes and mouth so kindly, that the heart of the comely Elviny warmed to him.

This youth of twenty and damsel of seventeen were by no means exceptionally old pupils in the Canaan district school, the short winter term of six months giving so little opportunity for an education that many of the sons and daughters of the district farmers availed themselves thereof till even a later age.

Amaziah in a loud though embarrassed voice announced his subject and read his production.

"'Say—I love you'"

"THE USE OF THE STUDY OF GEOGRAPHY

"*The study of Geography which so many people delight in studying. Is studied in all most all parts of the Earth and has been studied since the beginning of the World already. Without Geography we could not get along just so very well still, for if we wanted to go to Philadelphia. We might go to Harrisburg in a mistake not knowing what direction Philadelphia was from us. When Columbus sailed from Spain in search of the new World He might of went in the opposite direction if He had not of studied Geography before he undertook the expedition. Geography is off great importance to travelers that have to travel all over the World for if they did not know where the places they wanted to travel was They might of never found the places they wanted to travel.*"

"'*The use of the study of geography*'"

Amaziah had often said that he would rather plow for a week than write one composition. The above had been an especially strenuous effort, made in the hope that Elviny "wouldn't think he was so wonderful dumb, for all he couldn't speak off pieces of poetry as good as her."

He looked vastly relieved as he sat down; and he listened and watched with closest attention as Elviny in her turn gracefully rose, and, placing the tips of her fingers on her lips, coughed genteelly before commencing to read:

"SINGLE LIFE

"*Single life is the happiest life that ever was spent when you are single you can go when you please and come when you please and stay as long as you please. When you are single you have nothing on your mind still to bother you. Single life is the sweetest life that ever was spent. When you are single you can do as you please you have nothing to bother your mind at all.*"

Without so much as glancing toward Amaziah to note the full effect of these radical sentiments, Elviny complacently resumed her seat. As for him, he found himself so painfully surprised at learning that such were the views of the girl with whom he "kep steady comp'ny," that he had no attention to give to the remaining compositions of the class.

On their way home from school, in the April afternoon sunshine, he expostulated with her.

"Elviny," he said reproachfully, as side by side they walked on the high, wide pike, "the way you spoke in that there composition, it was something shameful! I didn't

"'*Single life is the happiest life that ever was spent*'"

think to hear you read off such thoughts as them."

"Och, don't be so dumb, Amaziah," Elviny said, poking him impatiently with her elbow. "A body don't have to mean everything that a person writes off in a composition. I had to write off somepin then, and it was so warm I couldn't think what for thoughts to write. There for a while I had a mind to put down how solemn it was to get married. But then it come to me," she said seriously, "how it would be a good deal more solemn not to get married. So I just wrote off them thoughts about single life, to get through once."

"Without so much as glancing toward Amaziah"

Amaziah's face lighted up with relief. "I'd have thought you meant it, and I was now bothered something wonderful already."

There had been a tacit engagement of marriage between these two ever since four years before, when Elviny was thirteen and Amaziah sixteen. It had happened one summer evening while they had been swinging together in a hammock by the front gate of Elviny's home. She had suddenly and unexpectedly said to Amaziah:

"Say, will you be mad if I tell you somepin, Amaziah?"

"N-aw!" in a tone of affectionate scorn at the suggestion. "Let it out!"

"Say—I love you!"

"Aw—I knowed that already. Say! Will you be mad if I tell you somepin, Elviny?"

"No; go on; tell me oncet."

"I love you."

The understanding thus established had grown clearer every day and hour of the past four years.

"If them books is heavy for you, you'd better leave me carry 'em then," Amaziah rather bashfully proposed, as Elviny, to relieve her right arm, transferred her pile of school-books to the left. Amaziah always felt embarrassed when he tried to be gallant.

"The full effect of these radical sentiments"

"Well," she conceded, letting him take them, "if you want. It ain't particular to me."

"What for book is this here that you're got covered? Oh, 'rithmetic. Do you know, Elviny," confidentially, "that's the only book I'm handy at? All the other books I'm dumb in."

"I'm different to what you are," she said; "I always thought 'rithmetic was an awful hard book. When it ain't so warm I'd sooner write off compositions than anything else in school; I'm most always got so many thoughts that way it comes easy to me still. But say, Amaziah, ain't you glad school's goin' to be done next week? And me and you'll never go to school no more. Och, but I'm glad!"

"Then we'll keep comp'ny reg'lar, ain't?" Amaziah affectionately demanded, coloring and looking self-conscious. "Soon's we're done school? You'll leave me set up with you Saturday nights still, ain't you will, Elviny?"

This privilege had not yet been granted to Amaziah, as, in the etiquette of Canaan, it would have been irregular for him to have "set up Saturday nights" with Elviny until both of them had finished their schooling.

"Who else would be settin' up with me but you?" Elviny answered, with an embarrassed little laugh. "Don't be so dumb."

Amaziah laughed too and blushed again, and glancing behind him on the pike, to make sure he was unobserved, he pressed his sweetheart's hand as it hung at her side. She returned the pressure, then of a sudden drew away from him bashfully, and for a moment they walked on in a rather strained silence.

"It's warm, ain't?" he presently hazarded.

Elviny started at a something unusual in his tone; something which betrayed the fact that for some reason he was not at his ease with her. She knew in a flash what had come into his mind, and, instinctively, she tried to fight off the dangerous subject which she felt he was taking courage to broach.

"Whether it's warm?" she repeated inquiringly. "Yes, I believe it's warmer than what it was right away this morning."

"It looks some for rain," he remarked.

"You think?" she said, a slight surprise in her voice as she examined the sky. "Does the noospaper call for rain?"

"I didn't see the noospaper this morning then, but the sky looks for showers, I'm afraid. I wisht it didn't, for I got to help Pop through—he's plantin' in the garden this evening, and if it rains we'll have to come in and leave it rain—and then we won't get done already."

"I wisht, too, it don't rain, so you'll get done once."

"Yes, anyhow," nodded Amaziah.

"Ain't this a hilly road?" Elviny quickly asked, to stave off the disagreeable theme she knew was impending. "It makes me some tired to walk from William Penn home." "William Penn" was the name of the schoolhouse.

"Yes," answered Amaziah, "there's hills a-plenty all along this here road. Why there's hills on the pike already when you're only at Noo Danville. Say, Elviny?"

He turned upon her with decision, and she winced as from a lash.

"There's just only but one thing, Elviny, that I wisht——"

"Now, Amaziah, I know what you're at—you needn't say nothin' about that!" Elviny tried to check him. "I don't want to hear to it!"

Amaziah set his jaw obstinately. "It's time me and you had this here thing out and done with it," he affirmed. "I like you better'n any girl in Canaan District, but I ain't goin' to waste my time settin' up Saturday evenings with a girl that's likely any day to give herself up and put on them darned Noo Mennonite little white caps and gray dresses with them foolish-lookin' capes! I know them Noo Mennonites!" he defiantly exclaimed, his resolution to speak his mind at its highest. Elviny turned pale at his tone and look of determination. "Your folks is Noo Mennonites from way back to your great grandfather already, and when it's in a body's blood that there way, they're bound to give themselves up sooner or later—unless they promise they won't never! I'm afraid of it for you, Elviny."

"A body to hear you talk, Amaziah, would think it was the small-pox, anyhow, 'stid of religion!" Elviny almost sobbed.

"Yes, and I'd anyhow as soon it was the small-pox! Elviny, I'd as soon see you dead as see your pretty face in one of them darned——"

"Amaziah! I ain't goin' to listen to no sich talk! You speak something shameful!"

"Well, I like you 'cause you're pretty, and if you went and made yourself ugly by wearin' them caps and capes and dull colors, and if you went and turned plain and wouldn't never no more go to town with me to see a circus or a county fair or have our photographs took or whatever, where'd be any comfort for a feller in bein' married? Elviny, I tell you now, straightforward, I don't want to be married to no Noo Mennonite. And if I ain't to marry you, I don't want to waste my time settin' up with you Saturdays."

"Then you needn't! I guess I can find a plenty others that wants to set up with me."

Amaziah's determined jaw slightly relaxed. But he held out. "And I guess I can mebbe find others that wants me to set up with 'em, Elviny, so far forth as that goes," he retaliated.

"You'll be keepin' comp'ny, I guess, with Sally Haverstick then!" crossly said Elviny.

"It's very probably," he relentlessly acknowledged, "unless you pass me your promise you won't never, as long as you live, put on one of them little white caps with ties."

"But, Amaziah, how can a body tell whether or no she'll ever come under conviction and be led to give herself up?" Elviny reasoned with him. "I might never, mebbe. Then again, I might any day. You might mebbe some time come under conviction yourself. A body can't tell of them things. I can't choose you instead of Christ, can I? I think you are, now, onreasonable."

"Giving the promise that he had required"

"You pass me your promise you won't never put on their little white caps with strings—that's all I got to say. Anything you want me to promise back again, I'll say yes to. If you'll pass me that promise, Elviny, I'll marry you and be the best husband to you that anybody kin."

Elviny knew full well the force of these words, for Amaziah always meant just what he said, and always stuck to it. Moreover,

" 'You think it out and write me off a note then' "

he would be fully able to carry out his promise to be a good husband to her, for he was the only son of a father who owned three large rich farms, and was, therefore, in the language of the neighborhood, very " well fixed."

" If it weren't in all your folks to turn plain, Elviny," Amaziah firmly continued, " I'd never have no fears of such a giddy-headed girl like what you are turnin' plain, for it's your nature to be wonderful fashionable, and you're so much for pleasure-seekin' that way. But," he continued, with stern emphasis, " I never knowed a son or daughter of a Noo Mennonite that didn't some time or 'nother in their life give theirselves up then. And I ain't runnin' no such risks. You pass me your promise you'll never wear a white cap with ties, or I'll go and keep comp'ny with Sally Haverstick or whoever."

" I tell you, Amaziah," Elviny said brokenly. " How can a body make such a promise like what that is? If I ever came under conviction——"

" Then join the Methodists or the Baptists. I pass it as my opinion that there's good in all religions. You can have religion without turnin' plain. The Methodists stays fashionable after they are convicted of their sins."

" But if I was to ever come under conviction, Amaziah, I couldn't never hold to the things of the World no more. It wouldn't be accordin' to Scriptures, deed'n it wouldn't," she pleaded, with quivering lips. " O, Amaziah!"

They had turned from the pike into the lane leading to Elviny's home, and the girl suddenly stopped short, leaned against the fence, bent her arm over her eyes like a child, and sobbed. Amaziah's kindly face twitched with sympathy for her trouble as he awkwardly stood before her.

" I guess you think I'm usin' you mean, Elviny," he said tenderly, but with no relaxation of his firmness. " But it's for the happiness of both of us in the coming future before us, Elviny. I couldn't be contented married to no Noo Mennonite. I couldn't like you if you didn't dress and act fashionable like me."

" But mebbe I'll never be called to turn plain," Elviny pleaded. " Mebbe," she said hopefully, " the Spirit won't never lead me to see the light."

" But then again mebbe It will. I ain't takin' no sich risks. You pass me your—here comes your Mom."

The sudden appearance at the fence of a stout woman holding a dish-pan full of lettuce was the occasion of Amaziah's sudden digression. The woman was dressed in the " plain " garb of the New Mennonites—a straight gathered skirt, an untrimmed waist extending below the belt (to distinguish them from the Old Mennonites, whose basques end at the belt), a three-cornered cape of the same material as the gown, and a little white cap with flying ties. At a first glance, Mrs.

Dinkleberger's face appeared to be commonplace enough, stolid, heavy, uninteresting; but a closer examination revealed in her otherwise dull eyes a look that only a deep experience of life can give to any countenance; that look which shows that through some channel the soul has sounded its own nether foundations and has laid hold upon a Reality which only those who lose themselves in the larger life of the Divine can ever find.

"Well," she said in a mild voice, "are yous home a'ready? It's only a quarter till four?"

"We come right away out then," said Elviny, speaking cheerfully to hide the signs of her weeping. "Ain't we did, Amaziah? Are you pickin' the lettuce for market, Mom?"

"Yes, I thought I'd do it for Pop; then it would be done."

"Why didn't you wait till I come to help you through oncet? She does too much still," she added explanatorily to Amaziah. "Ever since she had the pee-noo-mony, it makes her so tired 'till she gets the work through."

"Yes, I'll be glad when Elviny's done school oncet, so's she can help me still. We got such big washin's—'till each has their pile, the wash is big already."

"That's what Mom says still," said Amaziah sociably. "And she ain't no daughter to help her—only a dopplig (awkward) hired girl."

"Is your hired girl now a doppel, Amaziah?" Mrs. Dinkleberger asked with interest.

"Wonderful," Amaziah ruefully answered. "Why, here one day last week she put buttermilk in Pop's tea, and fast as Mom gets things redd up still, she gets 'em all through-other. Mom wishes she'd leave once. But she won't send her off 'cause it gives you such a name with the neighbors, you know, that way, for not bein' able to keep your hired girl. So Mom leaves her stay right on, for all it gives her so much extry work to have her, and makes her tied down so close."

"Don't she never get away, still?" Mrs. Dinkleberger asked sympathetically.

"Oh, now and again she gets to go some. But she never was one of them to go much that way. But you come to see her once, ain't? Don't look on turns."

"I don't know but what I will, for all I don't go much neither, since I turned plain—it's now four years back. And I have to wait for Pop still to drive the horse, 'cause our horse he can't be drove by no women, he still makes so ugly for me at the railroad crossin'. Why one muddy day he made so awful for me when he seen the cars that the buggy was all over dirt."

"Now, think!" said Amaziah in surprise. "Well," he added, "mebbe some day when I'm drivin' over here, Mom'll come along with me over."

"Yes, anyhow," answered Mrs. Dinkleberger hospitably.

"But I don't know just when it'll suit for the horse," Amaziah said, glancing at Elviny with a meaning look, as who should say, "It'll suit for the horse to haul me over here when you pass me that promise."

Elviny cast down her eyes and looked unhappy. Amaziah's face manifested no less misery, but he remained firm.

"Well," said Mrs. Dinkleberger, "I got to go in now and make supper. Won't you come in, Amaziah, and set a while?"

"'*She put buttermilk in Pop's tea*'"

"Saddy (thank you), but I can't just so very convenient to-day. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, Amaziah, then."

She turned to go, but Elviny checked her. "Wait for me, Mom, and I'll carry the lettuce in for you."

Hurrying through the gate, she held out her hands for the dish-pan. She did not want to be left alone with Amaziah. She knew him of old—he would stick to his point,—and she was afraid to trust herself with him lest she should yield.

"You'll have enough to do carryin' them schoolbooks Amaziah's holdin' for you," said her mother. "Take 'em from him and come along then in. You can make the fried potatoes for me for supper."

Without looking at her lover, Elviny took the books from his hands over the fence.

"Promise, Elviny," he whispered, as he

gave them to her. "Go on, dear! That you won't never wear one of them——"

Elviny shook her head, the tears rising again to her eyes.

"You think it out and write me off a note then," was his parting admonition. And Elviny left him and hastened after her mother.

"'Are yous home a'ready?'"

Elviny had known from the first that when Amaziah took that tone of firmness with her, she would, in the end, do what he demanded of her. So she was not surprised at herself when that night, sorely against her conscience, she despatched a note to him, giving the promise that he had required, namely, that she would "never wear one of them little white caps with ties," this particular feature of the Mennonite garb evidently standing to him for a symbol of all the asceticism and narrowness of the New Mennonites' life.

But Amaziah's joy in his conquest was short-lived. When two evenings later, being Sunday, he betook himself, clad in the "fashionable" apparel his soul loved, to the home of his sweetheart, he found her so pale, so silent, so woebegone, that he was stricken with remorse and sorrow for her. They did not discuss, or even mention, the painful subject of the promise; but Amaziah felt convinced, after a two hours' fruitless endeavor to make her "act sociable and pleasant," that poor Elviny would never be "contented" again with such a load of sin on her conscience as that promise seemed to be.

"It's most nearly as worse as if she'd turned plain," he thought, in great trouble of mind, as he wended his way homeward in the moonlight. "What's a body to do?"

He realized, as time went on, how great a proof of her love she had given him, and this increased tenfold his already strong devotion to her. But as week after week he saw her, under the effect of her burden of guilt, grow thinner and paler and sadder, his own conscience began to trouble him.

"She thinks she's choosed me before Christ," he mused. "And it's near makin' her sick! Poor thing, she won't never be contented no more, I'm afraid, 'till she's took back her word to me."

Tugging at his own heart-strings was the longing to release her from her promise—just for the joy of seeing her look happy once more. But he could not bring himself to that point of self-sacrifice. Her relief would be so great that she might be led, in her thankfulness to the Lord, to give herself up at once. And then where would he be? No; he must hold out in his determination to make her forswear the faith of her fathers. In time, perhaps, she would get used to it and cease to fret. He would wait.

"But I wisht I could see her lookin' contented once again," he said to himself one Saturday evening, as, with little pleasure in his visit, he walked up the lane to her home. "Blamed if I wouldn't most be willin' to do anything to see her lookin' contented again."

He was destined to have this generous wish of his put to the test sooner than he had counted on. When, ten minutes later, Elviny walked into her parlor to receive him, he knew, in a flash such as seldom came to his monotonous, slow-moving mental life, that never had he seen her more beautiful than she appeared to his eyes this night. She was robed as she had never been before. A light gray skirt hung straight from her waist, and a plain, untrimmed, close-fitting basque brought out the beautiful womanly development of her bust and shoulders, and was not concealed by the little three-cornered cape that lay over the basque.

The letter of her promise to Amaziah had been that she would "never wear one of them white caps with ties"—but, O, the subtlety of the daughters of Eve and the fatuity of the sons of Adam!—an Indian mull cap, not white, but of the faintest shade of gray and having no ties, covered her head.

However, her "plain" clothes were not the greatest change he found in her. What was this new light in her eyes that looked up at him with such deep happiness shining in their clear beauty? A feeling of awe fell upon Amaziah. Had Elviny indeed got religion?

"You see, Amaziah"—he heard her soft

" 'I've give myself up, Amaziah,' she replied with pale-faced, clear-eyed resolution "

voice speak as though coming from a distance, for there was a loud singing in his head that kept him from hearing her clearly —"I'm keepin' my promise. I ain't wearin' one of them little white caps with ties. This here's a tinted gray cap and ain't got no ties. The Scriptures haven't got nothin' about the color nor the ties, only that a woman's head shall be covered because her hair's a pride to her and pleasing to the eye."

"Are you turned plain, Elviny?" Amaziah managed to ask in a half whisper.

"I've give myself up, Amaziah," she replied with pale-faced, clear-eyed resolution. "I ain't broke my promise to you, and never will. I'll always wear these here tinted caps without ties to 'em. Now you have the dare to take me, or leave me be."

"Are you contented again, Elviny?"

"I never knowed before what happiness it was to be had in this here life. It's all in servin' the Lord, Amaziah. I had such a troubled conscience—it was now a wonderful troubled conscience I had this here while back already. And my fashionable clothes they condemned me something turrible. But it's all over now, Amaziah. I've give myself up and I'm dressin' plain, and I'll never walk no more in the paths of this World."

Thus had Elviny followed out the invincible law of her being; for the offspring of New Mennonite stock inherit, from an ancestry whose loyalty to conviction made them victims of the persecutions of the Thirty Years' War, a persistency in "reverting to the original type" that is in their very life blood, and needs only some stress of circumstance to bring it out in force.

"Turn your back around behind you and leave me see how the plain dress becomes you," was Amaziah's stolid comment upon Elviny's sublime renunciation.

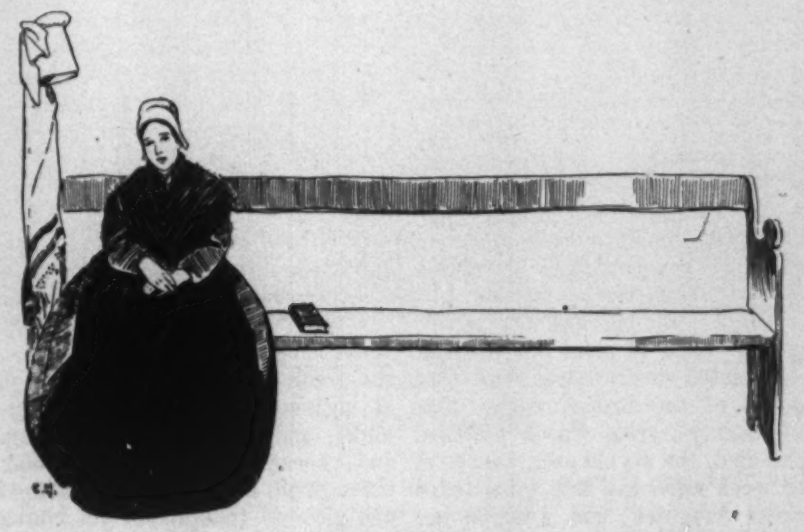
Elviny slowly revolved herself for inspection. When her back was towards him, Amaziah measured her shapely form with his masculine eye, then suddenly put his arms about her and held her close to his breast.

"It becomes you something surprising, Elviny!" he whispered ecstatically. "You never looked as pretty before. And I never liked you as good as what I do to-night!"

She turned in his arms and laid her head on his shoulder, with a long, happy sigh of relief. He pressed his lips to her soft neck and downy cheek.

"But we'll have to be married soon, Amaziah—before I join Meeting, you know. For after I'm once joined, I can't marry in the World, no more. And you're in the World, you know. So we'll have to be married soon."

"All right, Elviny," Amaziah heartily responded. "I'll make it suit just as soon as I otherwise can! We'll be married till the back end of August already!"



From the painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence

SARAH SIDDONS'S TRYST

BY CLARA MORRIS

Author of "Life on the Stage"

With two drawings by Edmund J. Sullivan

SHE was an ancient crone, in very truth, who told this tale to me. An Englishwoman born and bred, whose whole life had been passed upon the stage—indeed, 'twas by the scant margin of one single hour that she escaped being born in the greenroom of a theater.

Her father before her had been that thing we wonder at, "a strolling player," and had once been jailed by a country constable as a vagabond and mountebank, when he was giving "To be or not to be?" from a stage supported without unanimity by four unwilling barrels. But even so, stroller as he was, he had had his honors, he had climbed to a truly dizzy height; for through one never-to-be-forgotten week, in some far Scottish town, he had acted divers parts with that queen regnant of the British stage—that goddess of beauty—great Sarah Siddons. And when he died, the six old programmes of that golden week were the sole inheritance of his actress daughter; and when in her old age, while following the fortunes of her only son, she came to America, the vilely printed, yellowing rags of bills came with her, and were prized as other women prize webs of lace or ancient bits of silver.

She was an actress of the olden time, and knew the laws written and unwritten, and all the tricks of her trade. She "sawed the air" and mouthed her tragedy, tore her passion to tatters, and skipped and tittered through her comedy after the ancient fashion—but her memory was long and true. I liked to hear her broad-voweled, full-throated talk; and, dear heaven, but she loved the exercise! And so she often found me hanging on her words, my clasped hands resting on her broad knee, for she was a very *Falstaff* of a woman, who required especial chairs for her safe support; whose red and veinous cheeks sagged heavily, and were but the redder from comparison with the white curls bobbing against them. And yet she drank her beer from a great stone mug at high-noon each day, and again at midnight, and ate her cold beef and pickles and cheese—cheese—cheese, and laughed through all, her deep, side-shaking laughter, and gave no thought to yet increasing fat; but talked and talked and told of the power and the potency of the name of—Kemble?—Philip?—Charles? I know not now; I only recall clearly that night, when the heavy beating of the rain against the windows must

have damped down her laughter, since she called me to her on my late return from the theater, and with tender voice told me of in the draught, and told her this story of England's idol, Sarah Siddons, and of the tryst she kept.

The famous portrait by Gainsborough (1784) in the National Gallery, London

SARAH SIDDONS

another night, when she, a great girl of twelve, had sat upon her father's knee, when the country inn was chill and damp, and they could ill afford a fire, and he had wrapped her well in his old traveling cloak, and held her closer as the candle flickered

"Like many a one older and wiser than yourself," said he, "you think this woman whom the mob applauds and the great ones honor, has known but success and triumph all her life. But oh, my little maid, each goblet filled for human lips contains some

bitter drops, and though hers held but few, they may have made the harder swallowing, because the bitterness lay upon the top, where should have been but dancing bubbles from the amber depths and all the froth and sweetness of her youth.

"But for her unwise marriage she might not have known that dreadful night, when the London, that fairly crouches at her feet to-day, struck fiercely at her. The groundlings' laugh, the gallery's hiss; 'tis hard even for a man to bear them, be he ever so thick of skin or tough of fiber, but for a woman of sensibility and pride—good God, it's like the flaying of her alive!

"Ay, my lass, though you open wide your mouth and eyes at the wonder of it, 'tis true withal, Sarah Siddons once felt the agony and the shame of failure, and for a few years, that must have seemed like ages in their passing, driven from the paradise of London-town, suffered in the purgatory of the provinces. Traveling, rehearsing, making her stage gowns; studying the lines of new characters while pressing an ailing babe to her breast; and acting, acting, acting all the time, good parts and bad parts, comedy and tragedy, she allowed herself no rest; and the stinging lash that kept her to her work was the memory of the jeering laughter and the hiss that had come to her across the footlights that night in London-town, when she had perforce gone fasting to her bed, praying she might die ere the new day came, and the story of her defeat should reach the father and the mother who had cast her off.

"They had expected so much of her; they had talked so largely, in true Kemble fashion, of the triumphs she was to win—and she had failed, and they would be sore ashamed at the close kinship between them; and perhaps they might even rejoice now that her name was Siddons, since Kemble had ever been a synonym of success.

"Early in the next morning, young Siddons having sold his wife's pelisse that he might pay their small score at the inn, they were about departing, when Sarah, all cloaked and hatted, stepped back to the room a moment, and her husband heard her whispering something there.

"'To whom do you speak, sweetheart?' he asked wonderingly.

"She looked oddly at him, and oddly she answered, 'I make but a tryst with the woman who has suffered here, a tryst I'll surely keep—anon!'

"She smiled wistfully, gave a last glance about her, then nodding her head, slowly she repeated, 'Anon! I'll keep my tryst, anon!' and left the room, the inn, and London-town.

"During those slow years of exile, while Sarah Siddons was toiling to make of herself an actress great enough to justify her birth-name Kemble, time, too, oh, marvelous! was working *for* and not against her; delicately filling out certain hollows about neck and shoulders, changing angularities to lovely curves. Some there were who roundly vowed that she had even grown by inches, but that was drivel. Taller she was in sooth, but 'twas port and dignity that lifted her so high, not o'er-late growth of limb. And the voice, safe houseled in her strong white throat, time was slowly but surely changing that. Clear and cold and penetrating it had been, but 'twas growing deeper, richer, and flexible as any singing woman's; while bitter memories of wounded pride and tender ones of early love, gave a touch of human tenderness, whose power was all-subduing—a tone of voice possessed by no other Kemble, however great or famous. Thus time and the woman worked together to produce the great actress that was soon to conquer not merely England, but Great Britain.

"After several seasons of general work, she had decided to place her trust in tragedy alone, and she devoted herself to that class of play so successfully that people were already beginning to talk of her, when an incident occurred that worked to her great advantage. During one of her most woful scenes, a lady auditor was so overcome with emotions of pity and of terror, that she swooned away and was borne out to her coach. This testimony to Siddons's growing power was passed from lip to lip; by letter it traveled up to London, then bored and hungry for sensation. Next followed rumors anent the grace and beauty of the young tragedienne, and big-hatted belles with arms thrust elbow-deep in modish muffs, listened with supercilious brows and curling lips to wigged and jeweled beaux, who, snapping and tapping their snuff-box lids, profanely wondered how long the loutish managers meant to keep them waiting for a sight of the new actress, who, 'twas said, made other women in the play look like country wenches, so great was the beauty, where coloring of a young milkmaid was added to the manner and the movement of a duchess royal.

"At last these plaints and court demands reached the managerial ear—for the London manager is adder deaf to all provincial claims

"Profanely wondered how long the loutish managers meant to keep them waiting for a sight of the new actress"

—and lo! one day came a letter, blottily written on blue paper, sealed with scarlet wafers, that curtly offered to Sarah Siddons a brief engagement with a brief salary at Drury Lane Theater, London.

"O, magic word! O, *open sesame* to all the good things of the world! To her London might spell a home, competence, social position, and, above all else, fame!—the one thing she was greedy for. And when her doubting husband murmured, 'Might she not fail again?' she turned upon him with cold anger, exclaiming, 'Sir, Kembles are not born to fail twice in a lifetime!' And when her letter of acceptance had gone forth, she nodded her head gently, and, as if answering one who importuned her, said: 'Anon! I'll keep my tryst with thee, poor heart! Anon! then only can we rest.'

"And though her words filled with amaze

the loving, jealous husband, he dared neither question nor catechize.

"And then had come that night, when at old Drury Lane the rank and fashion and brain of London-town, in a very transport of approbation, had seen a woman, as true and pure as she was rarely beautiful, put forth her strong, white hands and secure the magic flower of *success!*

"It was the night when the privileged stare of George of Wales having ended in flushed and smiling admiration, the new actress had been caught up to the very heights of fashion. The night, my child, when as *Belvidera*, in old Tom Otway's play, 'Venice Preserved,' 'twas said she thrilled the audience with her beauty, she froze it with terror at her madness, and melted it again with her three wordless cries of sorrow.

"Ah, it was a wondrous night! And there were posies and messages and cards, from my Lady This and That, and by and by the regular habitués of the green-room were crowded to the very walls by the headlong surge of London's greatest men, who wished to offer homage to the newly-risen star, while finally the powerful Lady North invited Sarah to sup with her that night.

"Now Mr. Siddons loved the nobility with all his soul, and with obsequious gratitude would have accepted this invitation for his wife had she not swiftly interfered, saying she had a previous engagement, and no, it could not be broken. Her humble duty to her ladyship she would gladly make at any time appointed—only should she break her solemn pledge, the great Lady North would in her heart think ever poorly of her servant.

"And so majestic was her manner of speaking, that the messenger went back to Lady North and told her Siddons was well worth waiting for, and far too rare a creature to crush incontinently.

"Early in the evening Mr. Siddons had seen his wife sending forth a messenger, but he was too much occupied to inquire for what purpose. So when they left the theater, he was surprised to find her turning in the wrong direction. He corrected her rather shortly, for the memory of that rejected supper invitation rankled still. But she made stern answer: 'We go to our old lodging for an hour. I have my tryst to keep!'

"And while he glared at her in astonishment, there came to him the picture of his wife, standing hatted and cloaked, whispering to the empty room, and a chill creep came into his blood as though she were uncanny.

"'Twas a poor place of entertainment, and as they made their way to the well-remembered room, he gave thanks to the gods that better things had come to them at last.

"All her life Sarah Siddons had been called a cold, cautious, and most politic woman, but on that one night she seems to have yielded herself utterly to sentiment. Her husband, having closed the door, turned to find her standing in the middle of the ill-lit room, looking down upon the table, where was roughly served a crusty loaf, some cheese, and old brown mead, and he cried out, 'Was it for *this* you turned your back upon light and luxury, wine and brilliant company?'

"But she answered: 'Nay; 'twas for the woman who sorrowed here that awful night.'

"His eyes sank before her brilliant gaze, and suddenly he saw that there was a wonderful running together of opposite things. This radiant creature, with rose-flushed cheeks, was *Success* personified—*Success*, thrice triumphant! In youth, in beauty, and in art, great Sarah Siddons! And yet how close in point of time she came to that other creature crushed and forlorn who bore the same name; and he began to understand, though dimly, why they were there again.

"'Do you remember,' she asked, 'the woman who suffered here? She was so young—spoiled, too, and misled by home praise and large talk of her great gifts, but brave and very hopeful; and she strove so hard to win success, and smiled and struggled on, until her courage broke against a brutal hiss? Dear God, that hiss! It entered at the portal of her ears, and burning like liquid fire, made circuit of each chamber of her brain, then followed the coursing blood until to the very soles of her weary feet she glowed with shame! 'Twas here she fell, with arms outstretched across this table, and hid her face from view. And then suddenly, her worn, neglected body craving nourishment, she put forth her hand for food, but neither bread nor cheese nor wherewithal to purchase them! And so she went fasting to her bed; but in the morning, ere she left the cruel city, she had made solemn tryst with that suffering Sarah Siddons who had failed, and promised that if ever triumph came, if ever she won success as famous Sarah Siddons, she would return to that same room and sup full with her, and pride and gratitude might drive away the memory of that hiss! Now she is keeping faithfully her promised tryst.'

"At which the husband lifted the stone mug, poured the mead, and, gravely, on one knee, offered it to the great woman who was

"She leaned across the table, and with ineffable gentleness said: 'To you, poor heart, I drink and bring success'"

his wife. But though his heart was very tender to her, the creeping chill was in his blood still as she leaned across the table, and with ineffable gentleness said: 'To you, poor heart, I drink and bring to you *success!*'

"And he was truly a grateful man, when she in her turn filled the mug, and holding it to his lips, smilingly commanded him to drink, 'To the continued success of the favorite, Sarah Siddons, and your loving wife, sir.'"

"And then," said my very old informant, "my father wiped his eyes with an enormous red silk handkerchief, and said, 'A prodigious creature, my child—prodigious! And you can see she was a brave woman, too, for it was not an easy thing to do, to refuse an invitation from nobility at a time when actors were a little lower than the beggars!' Yes, prodigious is the word, for the gentle and strong, the beautiful and grea —old England's idol—Sarah Siddons."

And he looked surprised at the idea

A NIGHT WITH WHISPERING SMITH

BY FRANK H. SPEARMAN

Illustrated by Frederic R. Gruger

IT was at a time when widespread distrust of banks led to the hoarding of money in safety deposit vaults that old Colonel Fuller was robbed, and it was then I first met Whispering Smith. The Colonel was rich, but money, of which he had an abundance, was not the only thing that troubled him. The Colonel had what his friend, young Dr. Mercer, pronounced a rheumatic diathesis; other people called it profanity, but terms are a matter of taste. Dr. Mercer, house physician at the Richelieu, advised him to drink one quart a day of French vichy, and forbade him the red meats.

This prescription cost the Colonel considerable money, for the Doctor's fees were high. But the Doctor is dead long since, and the Colonel is dead, and with them it is now less a question of rheumatism than of ventilation.

I

"THE Colonel is prostrated; he has asked me to look after the thing, Willis," said I, after telling the story, "and frankly, I'm floored. I know something—not much—about the law of corporations, but I'll be hanged if I'm any good at recovering stolen property. Something must be done quick. If the case was yours, Willis, what would you do?"

"Lyman," replied Willis, at that time manager of the Richelieu, "if the case was mine I'd send for Whispering Smith. He looks after things like this. And I wouldn't lose any time, either."

"You would put the best detectives at work?" I asked anxiously.

"I would," answered Willis Howard; "but I would put them at work hunting up Whispering Smith."

"Do you mean to say you wouldn't put the Buckinghams on the case at once?"

"Not till I'd seen Whispering Smith."

At eight o'clock that night Willis Howard brought Whispering Smith to my room.

"Mr. Morse," announced Willis, addressing me briefly, "this is Mr. Smith. I have outlined the matter to him. When I get

into serious trouble around this house I turn it over to Mr. Smith. He would like to hear the details."

"They are distressingly few, Mr. Smith," said I, shaking hands with the long-sought Whispering. "Colonel Fuller went this morning to draw some money from his safety deposit box and found the box empty, except for some papers of small value. The last time he locked it up it contained $200,000 in currency."

Whispering Smith looked at me with some surprise.

"Mr. Morse is a friend of mine, Gordon," put in Willis Howard. "I'd like to see you do what you can for him."

"You're Mr. Lyman Morse, of Finch, Fuller, Lynde, Morse, and Stetson," remarked Whispering Smith, suddenly cataloguing our firm. I acknowledged the directory, noticing then for the first time the peculiarly ragged quality of voice that gave Gordon Smith his nickname. "I met you once before," he continued.

"Not to my knowledge."

"Does Colonel Fuller drink?" he asked abruptly, ignoring my disclaimer.

"Not unless you call a bottle of claret for dinner drinking," I replied, rather appealing to Willis Howard.

"No," confirmed the manager, "he doesn't drink, Gordon."

"Any drug habit?"

We shook our heads.

"Sure of that?" he persisted. We were sure.

"What about women?"

"There isn't one in the world." All of which astonished Mr. Smith varyingly. "Then let's go see him," he proposed, rising.

The Colonel lay in bed. Dr. Mercer and Leslie de Rode, the Colonel's young nephew, sat with him. I asked the Colonel to tell his story. Whispering Smith looked anxiously about the room.

"I drew the money from the Western National," began the Colonel brokenly, "just two weeks ago. After the New York banks quit paying out I thought I'd have the stuff handy for a turn, and I made three checks —two for $50,000 and one for $100,000. The money was given me in large bills. There was one package of $10,000 in $100 bills; the rest was in $500 and $1,000 bills, I think. I'm not sure," he groaned. "I'm not sure of anything but that I'm ruined."

I steadied the Colonel a bit; got him to describe how he put the money in the box himself, and with absolute privacy; to explain about his keys which he carried in a chamois sack suspended from a cord around his neck; that he never parted with them; that nobody else had access to his box.

"What do you think of it?" asked the Colonel's nephew, looking at Whispering Smith, who fidgeted occasionally. Smith made no reply. "What do you think of it?" echoed Dr. Mercer.

"Think of it?" echoed Mr. Smith, pushed for an answer and looking about uneasily. "I think, Doctor, there's a draft here somewhere, and I'll be condemned if I can locate it unless it's up that fireplace from the window."

"But what do you think about the robbery?" asked the Colonel pallidly, while Smith watched Dr. Mercer look for the leak.

Whispering Smith turned again to the Colonel. "I'd put a detective on it right off."

I jumped to my feet. "Put a detective on it?" I echoed curtly. "Why, what are you here for?"

"Me? I'm in the real estate business."

I looked at Willis Howard. Willis was looking at the carpet.

"If Mr. Smith gave me that advice I should certainly follow it," said he.

"I used to look up these matters a little," continued Whispering Smith in his nearest approach to a bland voice, "but real estate takes most of my time lately." He looked at his watch. "You can catch Charles Buckingham at the office now," said he, naming the first of the great detective agencies in Chicago. "I have an engagement at nine. I'll be going—but I want to do anything I can for a friend of Mr. Howard's. If I didn't have a sick boy at home I'd take the case up anyhow; as it is, I can't. Gentlemen, good-night." Then I noticed he shook hands all around, and cordially.

I felt like a fool after the manager and his friend had gone, but within two hours I got the Buckingham people into the case, and they took hold with the vigilance and the alertness that have made their name world-wide.

As I sat next morning in my office, the name of Gordon Smith was brought to me; Gordon followed closely after.

"No doubt you thought me drunk or crazy last night," he began at once. "I was nervous at being catechized before a crowd. I don't work to advantage with too many assistants. Colonel Fuller is partly knocked out. If I go into this case it isn't necessary for me to be known in it to anybody but you.

Let your detectives work away on their own lines. If you want me, let me work on my own. The question is," whispered Whispering, "do you want me at all?" and he looked surprised at the idea.

I made up my mind between the first and the last of his words. "I do want you," I returned.

"Then let me ask you a few questions." Straightway he shot fifty at me.

At his request I went to introduce him at the Western National for information about the bills. From the bank we went to the safety deposit vault. Their story was that Colonel Fuller had visited his box once since depositing the missing currency. The Colonel stoutly denied any such visit. Here was an issue of fact.

"Our clerks are beyond suspicion," insisted the vault manager, "and collusion with an outsider is out of the question."

"But on the day you claim Colonel Fuller visited his box he was laid up in bed."

"He is mistaken in the date. Our records are absolutely impassive."

There we deadlocked. A month passed and we were still absolutely in the dark. Nearly every night Whispering Smith dropped in to see me.

At last one evening he took something from his pocketbook. "There is one of the stolen bills." So saying he handed me a $100 Treasury note. I looked at it startled. "It is only an exasperation," said he. "If enough of them would come out we could trace something, possibly."

"You know this is one of the bills?"

"By the teller's record it is probably one of the bills. The man that stole them may never pass another here. The next batch may go to New York."

"Where did you get this?"

"From the Athletic Club."

"How?"

"The manager is a friend of mine."

I looked again at the unreplying note, which knew all the vexing mystery and spoke not.

"In itself," said Whispering Smith frankly, "there's nothing in the fact that the bill came from there. It is not the slightest evidence that the bill was passed there by the thief. The only way in which such straws become valuable is when you rake in a number of them. Not another bill has appeared in any bank or hotel or first-class restaurant in town. As for De Rode's belonging to the Athletic Club," he added, commenting on a suspicion I expressed, "so does Dr. Mercer, so does George Appleby, and half the young fellows about the hotel. What do I think of the Colonel robbing himself as the Buckinghams propose? Such things have happened."

"Dr. Mercer and Leslie de Rode sat with him"

"That doesn't tell me what you think," I persisted, for Mr. Smith's opinions were hard to reach.

"I didn't mean it should, but since you press me to-night I will admit something I wanted to keep till to-morrow. No bills, as I have told you, have come out in a regular way. Yet I have another of the stolen bills in my pocket."

He took from his vest pocket a roll of bills and passed one to me.

"This bill was handed me by Wesley Van Horn. He has charge of the stalls at Harlem. My friends are not always distinguished by their moral attributes. It was passed in by the man that runs the foreign books, Gus Harris. Now that's all I know till I reach Harris. To oblige me Van Horn went right after him, but Harris had been drinking, and couldn't tell a $100 bill from a highball. I've got him down-stairs boiling him out. It will be one o'clock before he can talk. Now I don't believe you'll sleep any better from knowing that much. In the morning I would have had it all for you anyway."

"Gordon," I exclaimed, "come on. I'll go with you and hear the rest of this to-night."

"Then just take off that black tie, put on a red ascot, get your mustache curled, and you'll pass without introduction."

II

AT midnight, a little gay for a corporation lawyer, I followed Whispering Smith into the bathroom. When we got down-stairs the badly-wanted gambler was in the Turkish, asleep. Whispering Smith gave certain instructions to the attendant, and we took a cab to Boyle's chop-house for the gambler, Van Horn.

"Wesley, shake hands with Alderman Lyman," said Whispering Smith as we approached. "You never told me, Wesley, whether you were any relation of Hi Van Horn, who ran the privileges at the Casino the year of the World's Fair."

"Does he owe you anything?"

"Nothing but gratitude."

"He's no relation of mine; but he owed me $400 when he quit the town. I'm glad to see you, Mr. Lyman, and Mr. Smith. What will you have?"

"Thank you; we're just from supper. I want you to go over with me to talk to Harris, Wes. By the way—and it's often occurred to me to ask you, and I never could think of it—were you named after John Wesley or Charles?" asked Whispering Smith amiably.

"I wasn't named after either."

"No?"

"No. I was named after a camp meeting. Well, if you won't eat and won't drink, smoke."

"But we don't smoke," persisted Whispering Smith in bright-eyed gratitude.

"Then let's go hunt up Harris. What's the row anyway, Whispering?"

"It's like this. My friend here is in your line."

"How's that?"

"He's a collector of stamps, Wesley; yes. Just now he's looking up some large stamps that are pretty scarce, see? I'm helping him out on his collection—and, incidentally, adding a few to my own," continued Whispering Smith, lowering his tone modestly, "yes."

Which parable Wesley understood without further parley. The three of us broke together into the Richelieu baths about one o'clock. Harris, the tout, was in the barber's chair.

"Gus," said Van Horn, "these are friends of ours—Alderman Lyman, Whispering Smith. You turned in a $100 bill to-night."

"And six fifties," sparkled Harris between his teeth. "There was only nine-sixty on the whole book. It was light—light——"

"That isn't it. These folks want to know who passed the bill. It's a counterfeit and I'm stuck. It doesn't come out of you—but we want the guy that did us, see?"

Harris looked at Van Horn and at Smith and at my ascot.

"A coon."

"A coon?" I stammered.

"A coon; and I took the notice because I seen him once before. Gi' me a cigar, Van. It's a coon; say, I'll nail him—he's out there every day. A coney, eh?"

"A coon is a hoodoo on me every time," observed Whispering Smith softly. "What's his name?"

"Name? Them fellows never have no name," scoffed Harris, lighting his cigar scornfully as he stepped out of the barber chair, stretched himself, and looked at his watch. "One o'clock, ain't it?"

"But you've seen him," urged Whispering Smith indifferently.

"Why here, Wes," exclaimed Harris, turning suddenly and pointing his cigar at

"Rained a perfectly frightful shower of blows on the head of the obstinate darkey"

Van Horn; "of course I seen him. You seen him. It's the coon that takes the hats at the Parker House Café—that's where I seen him."

"That light chocolate coon?" muttered Van Horn.

"Light chocolate," repeated Whispering Smith softly. "And I'll bet $100 I don't know him, for I always eat in the restaurant up-stairs. That comes of being exclusive. Gus, if you've got an hour to spare, let's hunt him up. I've got a wheat deal on hand to-morrow, and I'd rather do it now."

The tout looked at Van Horn. "Of course," nodded the bookmaker, "you'll do anything for a friend of mine."

"Then we'll turn you loose right here, Wes," suggested Whispering Smith briskly, "and I'm yours truly. Gus, let's get started."

With Harris in hand we found the night clerk at the Parker, and got the address of the café attendant. It took us three deep in a hansom to Dearborn and Twenty-sixth streets. Our search brought us to a flat. We roused a sulky landlord; but Whispering Smith, by a liberal bribe, got admission. After two awkward mistakes we routed out the boy, Charlie Sutherland, who, Harris declared, had passed the note.

"What you fellows want?" asked the mulatto, sitting up in bed as Whispering Smith lit the gas.

"Nothing at all, Charlie, if you're good-natured and talk quick," explained Whispering Smith. "We just want to know where you got that bill you bet on Night Express in the Gravesend Free-for-All this afternoon. Night Express won; there was a mistake in the wire. There's a good bit of money coming to you if it's straight; but Gus Harris here, who took the bet—you remember him, don't you? Yes. Gus heard the bill was swiped with a roll a gentleman lost in the café to-day. I belong to the detective staff at the Parker. Tell him where you got the bill, Charlie. If it's straight you're entitled to your money, and I'll see that you get your bet. If you swiped it we want the rest of the roll. It was a five-to one-shot, Harris says, which would make you winner five hundred on Night Express, and I guess from what Wes Van Horn says, she won. H'm?"

"Who says I swiped it?"

"Nobody has said it right out. The

black-haired fellow that works at the last chair in the barber shop down-stairs claimed he could tell more about it if you didn't. I told these boys we'd hear what you had to say first. Boys, am I right?"

"I didn't swipe no money from nobody."

"I never thought you did. Where did you get it?"

"I made dat bet f'r a friend o' mine. If it's won, d' stuff is his'n."

"Exactly."

"He gi' me de money to put up day befo' yeste'day, and I neva bet it till yeste'day."

"The way it's turned out it's a good bet. Give me a match, Charlie," said Whispering Smith. "Am I right, Gus? It was a good bet. Thanks, Charlie. Now, who's your friend?"

"Wh'?"

"The fellow that gave you the money."

"I'll never tell y' dat."

"Why not?"

"'Cause I said I wouldn't."

"Oh, yes you will," observed Whispering Smith pleasantly.

"Y' c'n arres' me ef you want. Y'll never get n'thin out a me, boss."

"Oh, yes we will!"

"How'll y' do it?"

"We'll pound the life out of you, Charlie."

The mulatto reached for his revolver. The men grappled. Harris, a dead game sport, shut the door with a bang; Whispering Smith rained a perfectly frightful shower of blows on the head of the obstinate darkey. Outside the landlord hammered on the door; the tout stuck a pistol in his face, and swore he would shoot him if he entered. It looked like a riot.

"Darkies are hard to work on a time limit," panted Whispering Smith, standing over his man a minute later. "Now, Charlie, behave yourself," he continued. "Here's a towel; but you mustn't monkey. I'll kill you before I quit you without the name. We ain't going to arrest you; we ain't going to fool with you. I want the guy's name, and you'll only get pounded worse if you hold it up on us. Here's the money you passed—see?" and Whispering Smith held up the Treasury note before the dazed eyes of the colored man, whom he helped to sit down on the bed. "Give me the name and I'll count you out an even $100. Don't be a clam."

"He'll kill me if I give him up."

"If he does you'll die rich, Charlie. If you take me now I make it $250, and in big bills. You needn't be afraid of the fellow, because I shall pinch him right off, anyway."

"Gi' me de two-fifty."

"Give me the name, you blackguard; my word is good for ten times that. Gus, count $250 out of that roll," said Whispering Smith, wiping one hand on the shoulder of his victim, while with the other he passed Harris a handful of money.

"It's Oliver Ames; gi' me de money."

"What did I tell you?" asked Whispering Smith calmly, appealing to me. "Is he on days or nights now, Charlie? Give him the $250, Gus. It's all right. So it's Oliver Ames?"

"Do you know him?"

"Of course I do; and, Gus, you just step outside the door a minute and pacify that landlord, will you? Where's Ollie working now?"

"At the Richelieu."

There was a silence like death. My breath caught; the foul, stuffy room had become a star-chamber.

"At the Richelieu," echoed the little detective at last. "What's he doing there?"

"On the bells."

"On the bells—days?"

"Sitting in a drowse"

"Days."

"Where did he raise this, Charlie?"

"I dunno—he's got plenty mo'."

"Plenty more, I guess; and where's he rooming?"

"At the Empress."

"Over on Wabash?"

"Yes, s'h."

"Charlie, I'm obliged; take care of yourself. Good-by."

"You will have to stay here just a minute till I can get a plain clothes man to watch this coon," continued Whispering Smith to Harris and me as we groped to the hall. "I've got two-fifty in him, and I don't want to let him get away till I run down his story." He hurried out. It was three o'clock when he got back with our relief, and, shaking hands with Harris, sent him uptown in a cab.

"How do these gamblers do so much for you, Gordon?" I asked.

"We have to let some people rob in this town to keep others from getting robbed. I divide all people into two classes—those that want to get robbed and those that don't. All we look after are the latter. Now for what may be not only interesting—but tough."

We stood on the curb, and with the words he helped me into a cab.

"He replaced and buttoned the sleeping man's vest"

"Do you think the mulatto lied?" said I.

"No. I'm pretty confident he didn't." He paused. "No. This bell-boy isn't the thief; he may be in—but no, I don't believe it. I tell you, I'm in the air. It was never worked by bell-boys nor con. men. It throws me up—that's all there is to it."

He sprang from the cab at the Empress door with nervous alacrity, and dashed across the sidewalk so fast I barely caught a glimpse of Wabash Avenue in the wicked hour. I followed through the swinging baize doors and hurried after him up the deadened stairs.

Gordon walked to the office counter and leaned over it to arouse the clerk, sitting in a drowse in a big arm-chair.

"Hello, my friend," murmured Whispering Smith.

"Hello. Say, I want to see Ollie Ames a minute. Do you know whether he's come in yet?"

"Ollie Ames? I guess he's in."

"All right. Let's see—same old number?"

"Twenty-six."

"Twenty-six is on the third floor, isn't it? Oh, in the annex. Say, they closed up McCague's place to-day. That's right; getting worse in this town every day, ain't it? I should remark. Come on," he snapped at me like a ferret. I stumbled behind him through a dark hallway, half down an intervening stairway, and up again by a second flight into a hall absolutely dark. With flash matches Whispering Smith made his way from door to door to twenty-six. Then he put his finger on my breast.

"I don't know this duck. Some of them are quick with a gun. You had better stand

here on this side of the door; not in front of it, mind you, nor over there, and wait until you hear me say you are coming. If there's a shot and you don't hear me after it, get out to the street quick as you can and turn in the alarm at the corner patrol box. Here's the key."

"Stop a bit," I broke in. "You mean you may get killed?"

"Not a chance in a thousand; but I don't want to leave you here like a fool if I do. Moreover, if he gets me he will run out and down the hall, and if you stand there he'll pot you, too. The house detective of the Richelieu will be here in a minute, anyway. Now he's not going to get me. But we must be ready if he does. I shall try his door with the wire, and I may get in without disturbing him."

I stood where he put me in the dark. I heard the manipulation of the lock with the skeleton, and my heart hung on every faint click of the sliding bolt. I heard the knob softly turn, the door spring on its hinges, and from within through an open window came a puff of night air; after a moment the heavy respiration of a sleeper. Whispering Smith, passing in like a cat, left the door slightly open.

I caught at once the whiff of an anæsthetic. It might have been three minutes later that I heard the scratch of a match and the faint puff of the gas as Whispering Smith cautiously lit it. He beckoned me in and closed the door. On the bed I saw a small man lying in his shirt sleeves.

Throwing off his coat, the detective began searching the room with the utmost energy and thoroughness. There was scant furniture to impede him. He ripped the carpet edges and felt along the baseboard for dummy pockets; he went through the bureau and even into the upholstered chairs. Then grabbing the coverlet under the sleeping bell-boy he motioned to me. I took the other end, and we lifted the fellow to the floor. The detective, with a superb confidence in the anæsthetic, removed the pillow, shook a pistol free under it, opened the cylinder, emptied the cartridges into his pocket, and placed the revolver on the bureau. He ripped up the woolen pillow, ran his knife along the edge of the excelsior mattress, peered inquisitively at Mr. Oliver Ames for a few seconds, and tackled him.

Just as he rolled Oliver on his back there was a rap at the door. Before I could move I saw in Whispering Smith's hand the glitter of a knife as he sprang to the gas and blew it out before any one at the door could open.

"It's me."

Whispering Smith made no response.

"'Rubbered till I raised de dough'"

Standing at the foot of the iron bed, I grasped the rail in a cold sweat.

"It's Colleran—you there, Ames?"

I heard the scrape of a match as Smith lit the gas.

"Why didn't you rap twice, Dave?" he asked, as the house officer of the Richelieu entered the room.

"Wasn't sure you were here; didn't get your message exactly straight. What's the racket?" Smith locked the door behind Colleran, and without answering dropped on his knees again beside Ames. Rifling his clothes with a deftness that would be dangerous in a crowd, Gordon Smith turned out no end of stuff, among other effects a roll of bills from an inside vest pouch. These he ran hurriedly over. They were all small—fives and twos and ones. He replaced and buttoned the sleeping man's vest. He turned things absolutely inside out, and without, as far as I could see, any results.

"That's all," he said briefly. "Help me

lift him, Colleran. No; take hold of the spread and drop him hard." As we had lowered him, they raised him and dropped him with a jolt on the bed. Then Smith took hold of his arms and jerked him a while with violence. After that he lowered the gas down to a glimmer. I smelt ammonia; it came from close under Oliver's nostrils.

"'*Who had?*'"

"Now, let's break in on him. His gun is empty, Dave," whispered Gordon Smith, motioning us to the door. He stepped to the gas-burner, turned it on full, looked an instant on the bell-boy, and, reversing the cock, left us in darkness. Colleran, meantime, pounded on the door.

"Hi, there! Ames! Oliver! Hi! Wake up! Open up here. Hello, why the door's open," exclaimed Colleran, throwing it ajar with a bang.

"Hello, Ollie!" he roared, advancing towards the gas-jet as he struck a match. Gordon Smith pushed me behind the door, and the two advanced to the bed. I saw Whispering Smith put his hand on the sleeper's shoulder.

The first rational move the bell-boy made was to reach under his pillow.

"Tut! Tut! Hold on, Oliver, hold on," urged Colleran, putting his fingers patronizingly over the muzzle of the revolver as the trigger snapped viciously. "We're all friends here."

"All friends," echoed Whispering Smith. "Oliver, sit up; wake up. That's right; open up. Put down your gun; those automatic firing pins are a fraud, anyway."

"What you fellows after?" spoke Oliver Ames, with a bite of savagery.

"Why, Oliver, I'm sorry to say we're after you. Now sit still," persisted Gordon Smith, as the victim started to cover him with the revolver. "Don't try to shoot that at me. I mean you well, my boy. It's the difficulty of passing the big bills that has brought us here; that's all. The big bills gave you away. Now sit still."

"What you talking about?" sputtered Oliver with a forcible interjection and an awful pull on his disordered faculties.

"Talking about the way big bills trip a man, Ollie. I want to say first of all there's no disposition to be hard on you."

"I've heard that kind o' stuff."

"Very likely."

"Yo' can't bluff me."

"We don't have to. We've got you dead. Even your pistol is hoodooed. Now tell me where you got the idea of hiding part of it in the lining of your cap." Whispering Smith looked from Ames to Colleran and back again with amiable amazement, as he held up a cap for their inspection. "And who ever heard of carrying your cap in your inside vest pocket? Still, a man would never guess from looking at that cap that I had just ripped six $100 bills out of the lining, Oliver." The bell-boy started frenziedly. "Oliver, it's all up, I tell you," persisted Whispering Smith. "I've got the money and I want a lot more of it. Here are seven of the bills," and to my amazement Whispering Smith certainly did produce that much of the missing money.

"Where's the rest of it, Oliver?" asked

Whispering Smith. Oliver hesitated; then went to pieces.

"I spent it," he growled.

"Why, no, Oliver—not all. You haven't been buying any hotels or anything, son; not hotels?"

"I bought Paris Mutuals."

"How many?"

"Three hundred. I only got ten."

"Only ten—well, give it all to us, Oliver; the whole thing. It's your best play."

"I been waitin' on him for a year."

"I see."

"Taking up cocktails and flats and splits and running errands."

"I thought you said he didn't drink, Colleran," observed Whispering Smith reproachfully.

"One night I was bringing up some vichy," continued Oliver Ames, "an' I opened de door—it wasn't locked—and he was over at de mantelpiece, and he turned on me like a cyclone, and began a-cursin' me for comin' in widout knocking. An' I says to myself, 'All right, my buck, you've got stuff hid dere,' an' next day I got a pass-key an' rubbered till I raised de dough, stuck in a crack nex' the chimney. Maybe he wasn't red-headed for a month, an' never squealed for a good while, I'm a-guessin', neither."

"Not for a good while; that's dead right, Ollie. Go on."

"What's to go on?"

"About the rest of it."

"You got it dere in your hand. I got all he had."

"Who had?"

"Dr. Mercer."

"Dr. Mercer," echoed Whispering Smith. "Oliver, the doctor, I may say, isn't disposed to be hard on you. Colleran will, I may say, keep an eye on you till we get things straightened out. Dave, we'll leave you right here with the boy. Come, Mr. Lyman."

Whispering Smith, walking like a pacer, led the way to the Richelieu. We climbed the stairs to my room. As I lit the gas, Whispering Smith locked the door behind him and broke the long silence.

"It's up to Mercer."

"Smith, I can't believe the thing."

"I'm going right after him."

"I'll wait here."

"No; you'll have to come," said Whispering Smith positively. "You must rap him up; when he opens I will talk."

"What does it mean?" I asked myself every step of the way to the Doctor's door. How I ever forced myself to rap there in the dead of the morning marvels me yet.

"It's Morse, Doctor," I said unsteadily, as Mercer spoke from within. "Open a minute, will you?"

"Just a minute." It seemed ten minutes before the door opened.

"What's wrong, Mr. Morse? Collywobbles?" asked the Doctor, peering out.

"Not exactly, and yet you might call it that, Doctor," interposed Whispering Smith. "I'm the one, Doctor. Let me sit down." So saying, he shoved the whole scene into chairs in the Doctor's sitting-room.

"I've been spending the night with Mr. Morse. I wouldn't have bothered him to come and introduce me if it had been at any other hour," began Whispering Smith.

"A sick man doesn't need any introduction," observed the Doctor, as he sat facing us in his trousers and slippers.

"'*It's Morse, Doctor*'"

"'Get out of here!'"

"Sorry to disturb you, anyway. But, Doctor, you may not remember I called on you once in behalf of the Guardian Safety Deposit Vaults."

"Yes."

"Spoke about the Fuller robbery."

"I don't quite get you," said Dr. Mercer.

"My very difficulty heretofore, Doctor," smiled Gordon Smith; "but it looks different now. In the first place, we have got the man who robbed you."

There was a pause before Dr. Mercer retorted; yet to me his face told nothing beyond ordinary surprise.

"Who's been robbing me?"

"Your bell-boy."

"I wasn't aware of it."

"That's curious, now; especially as he touched you for ten $100 bills at one time. Here they are, Doctor—at least, seven of them—and three have gone the way." Whispering Smith stepped forward, told the bills one after another rapidly over, and put them at Dr. Mercer.

"They don't belong to me, my friend."

"I know they don't. They belong to Colonel Fuller, but they came from here, Doctor." Speaking, he stepped to the mantel, and as if by instinct put his hand under the chink in the slab. "Right from this crack."

"Are you drunk or dreaming? What's the matter with this man?" demanded Dr. Mercer, turning to me; but his face was setting into paste.

"To put it bluntly, Doctor, I want you to explain," said Whispering Smith.

"I can't explain a pipe dream, my poor fellow. What you need is rest."

"I know it. What makes me tired is to have to push you so far. Explain to me why you run two different boxes at two different safety vaults under two different names?"

It seemed to drive the iron clear through the Doctor. He sat for an instant transfixed; then he shouted a defiance—only, too loud.

"I don't explain my business to every

lunatic that breaks into my room at midnight. Get out of here!"

Whispering Smith appeared hurt. "Don't you understand? You are under arrest."

Mercer started.

"I will stay with you, Doctor, until nine o'clock; then I want you to go to your boxes with me and open 4072 at the Western National Vaults and 1018 at the Guardian. It's brutal—I know it; but I can't help that, Doctor. It's up to you."

Something in the detective's words froze the dumbfounded physician. "Morse," he asked nervously, "what does this mean?"

"What does it mean, Doctor!" I echoed, steadying my voice as I could. "For God's sake, what *does* it mean?"

"You will ruin my reputation by such crazy proceedings. What recourse have I after I'm disgraced? If you arrest me I am ruined. Now I appeal to you. I am as innocent of this charge as a baby. I am innocent. Morse, for God's sake have some consideration for me! I tell you, there's not a shred of evidence against me."

Whispering Smith stared at the ceiling.

"Doctor," said I; "if you are innocent no one will be gladder to see it than I. The case is, and has been, in this man's hands from the day it opened. Tell him everything you know, and tell it now. It is impossible for your best friend to advise you more sincerely."

Dr. Mercer sat frozen. Then of a sudden he started to his feet. Both of us, I think, saw the strange expression on his face.

"I swear I am as innocent as a baby," he cried. "If you are determined to ruin me——"

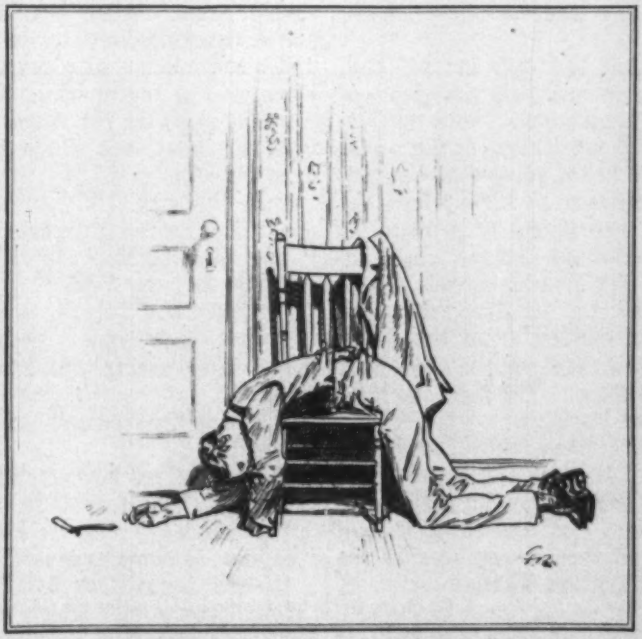
"Now don't talk slop," whispered the detective. "See here; if you're innocent, give Mr. Morse the keys to your boxes now. Meet us at the Guardian Vaults at nine o'clock. No one need know you are a suspect. It will save searching your room."

"I'll do it," said Mercer calmly. His mood had changed. "The keys? There they are." He took from his pocket a wallet and picked two keys; handed them to me; his finger touched mine; it was like ice.

"You are not to leave your rooms until you are ready to go to the vaults, Doctor. Nine o'clock."

Dr. Mercer stared at him. "Nine o'clock," he repeated, vaguely. I well remember the words.

Whispering Smith, detailing one of Colleran's men at the door of the 508 suite, followed to my room and threw himself on the couch. I sent for coffee, but he was asleep before it arrived. A cupful was hardly necessary to keep me awake till day. At breakfast I barely tasted food. Whispering Smith ate for a time with apparent unconcern. Then of a sudden he threw down his paper, looked spryly at me, passed his napkin across his lips, and pushed his chair from the table. "By George, I'll be back in a minute," he exclaimed, rising. "Sit still."



"His head fallen over the side of a chair between his arms"

For five minutes I sat alone. A man walking rapidly into the dining-room came straight to my chair.

"Mr. Smith would like to see you quick at 508," he whispered.

I caught the elevator and made my way around into the 508 corridor, Colleran's man behind me. Whispering Smith stood with Dave, his ear at the door.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"I've made a mistake."

"He's gone?"

"No. I heard him in there a minute ago. Just the same, I shouldn't have left him

alone." He pounded with both hands on the door. "Doctor," he called, as loud as his ragged throat would carry; "open up or I'll smash you in." Without another word he ran to the end of the corridor. I heard a crash of glass, and in a moment he was back with a fireman's axe.

"Stop!" said I. "Would he shoot through the door?"

"He has no pistol."

"How, in God's name, do you know everything?"

"It's my business. Get back, will you? Stand clear there."

He swung the axe like a sledge and sunk it into the oak. Again he landed on the knob and on the bolt; the door gave and he ran into the room. The blinds were closed, the shade drawn. Whispering Smith sprang to the window, tore the shade from the roller, and jerked open the blinds.

"He's here," said he, trying the bedroom door, "and locked in. Give me the axe, Foley. Get that crowd of rubbernecks out of the hall. Damn it, shut the door." Without looking to see his orders executed, Whispering Smith smashed at the inner door. As it gave way he caught the knob. I pushed forward, but he held me back.

"Don't take any unnecessary chances. Just a second."

While Foley kept the mob in the hall, Whispering Smith pushed into the gloom of the inner apartment; a moment later an electric button snapped and a lamp lit the room. Kneeling across a chair, almost at the feet of the little detective as he turned from the switchkey, I saw the figure of a man, his head fallen over the side of the chair between his arms. Whispering Smith, stooping, lifted his head, but he dropped it with a start; it almost parted from the body. Stepping behind and catching the shoulders, he lifted the head back. The face was Mercer's. He had cut his throat.

Whispering Smith, like a whirlwind, inventoried the room. He had the whole story a minute later, when he handed me a note, incoherent in terms, but addressed to me, saying that the missing money was in the Western National Deposit Vaults.

There, an hour later, we found in the safe rented by Mercer, not six inches from Fuller's empty box, the packages of bills that covered the trail of so much crime and horror.

"How could he ever have done it?" I stammered in amaze, sitting in the coupon room with Whispering Smith as we told over the bills.

"Not so difficult, after all. He got hold of the Colonel's keys; just how, will be buried with him; but he evidently got them, and made this duplicate." He held up a key which he had unearthed under the silk lining of a hypodermic case. It opened Fuller's box.

"But with the double tumblers, and unable to visit the box without an attendant, who opens it with his own key?" I exclaimed.

He cut me off impatiently. "Yet it is done. Suppose he runs in here—a new clerk opens for him. Fuller's box was 4098; Mercer's own, right next to it, 4072. 'What's your number, Doctor,' says the clerk. '4098,' says Mercer, and flashes the key, opens it, carries the safe to the coupon room. —There you are. He had only to carry the boodle away with him in an instrument bag, and the next day bring it back to his own box."

That night, seated at Colonel Fuller's bed with Willis Howard, he told us some, not all, of the details. Of how he had first found from the list of the Guardian Vault patrons that Mercer had a box there under an assumed name. After that it was only time and Whispering Smith against a helpless man under surveillance at every turn. Afraid to leave, and in terror while he stayed, an accidental theft in his room had thrown him into the steel trap which had lain so long open for him.

"By the way, Mr. Smith," faltered Colonel Fuller, as the little man started to leave, "there's something else. Tell me what I owe you for your work."

"I leave that to you, Colonel."

"That isn't right. Only you know how many other nights you have spent at this thing."

"But he'll never tell," interjected Willis Howard.

"Then tell me how much I shall pay you," urged the Colonel.

"If you leave it to me I shall say $5,000. I've been to some expense."

"Then I shall say five," responded the Colonel promptly, "which makes ten. You have saved me from penury."

"I wish it could have been done with more skill. I made one fatal mistake. Gentlemen, good-night."